

Truth
and
Infidelity
Contrasted.

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GOD'S TRUTH,

— AND —

MAN'S INFIDELITY,

— OR —

Faith and Sight Contrasted,

A BOOK FOR "THESE LAST DAYS,"

BY LEROY FOOTE.



- "Contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints."—Jude 8.
"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in the Lord to the pulling down of strongholds."—2 Cor. x. 4.
"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."—Eph. vi. 12.
"For we walk by faith and not by sight"—2 Cor. v. 7, and we "sow beside all waters."



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Reader, the God with whom we have to do, is a God of solemn, divine reality. He is presented in His Word, as revealed in the Person of Christ, for "great is the mystery of godliness, *God was manifest in the flesh*, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory." In the face of this solemn truth, we propose to look at some of the realities which our God has revealed unto us, and may our hearts be subject to His Word, and our spirits toned with deep reverence, as we enter upon our meditations over what He has presented for our edification and comfort. And as a result of our brief review of Divine Truth, may we not only prize His Word more highly, but become more fortified against that which He is forced to enter into judgment upon, that what He approves may stand out in strong contrast to what He must (if consistent with Himself) necessarily condemn. We ask all who love the truth as it is revealed in the Person of Christ, to resist error, "to prove all things and hold fast that which is good." We would put no legal bondage upon the necks of any, but endeavor to set forth the true character of that which makes a "fair show in the flesh," by presenting something desirable while it contains the very essence of spiritual distraction, and we would briefly attempt to show that "the way thereof is death." The increasing prevalence of false doctrine, and its finely clothed appearance to resemble truth, calls for plain speaking and earnest, simple detail, that all who read may understand something of the character of that in which we are moving "in these last days." On every hand, false lights are rising up to lure simple souls into infidelity and despair, God's own Word is scorned and derided by the proud assumptions of man, while human reason and carnal speculation, seek to measure the Infinite God, and deduce their own finite conclusions from the base material which the natural man can only possess to work upon. To meet the subtlety and craft of such spiritual foes, we need to bring them into the light of God's Word, and glance at their origin and results, for by its light, all that which is opposed to God is made manifest. The following brief effort, aims to present a line of contrast between faith and sight, and the reader is especially requested to mark the *difference of character* between what man desires in nature, and that which God values according to His own estimate. If this difference is entered into in spirit, the value of the work will be more fully apparent.

L. F.

GOD'S TRUTH and MAN'S INFIDELITY.

CHAPTER I.

The simplicity and stable character of scriptural authority—
Origin of infidelity—Different phases and forms of unbelief—
Reflections.

Authority for what we assert, is of paramount importance. Imaginative conclusions, will not stand thorough tests. The human mind is susceptible to influences, and unless the heart be established in grace with truth in the inward parts, there will be instability, double-mindedness and an uncertain sound produced. Man needs authority from God for what he asserts, or he soon manifests what God's Word declares, that "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." To what then can we look for authority, with such confidence, as to the Word of God?

What can take its place and inspire such strength of faith as it? What authority is so simple, yet so comprehensive; so varied yet so permanent; so minute in detail and so general in scope; so descriptive of the outward creation, yet so profound in its revelation of the inner and unseen though to the eye of faith. Its character is above question, for who will attempt to set aside what God has declared? It matters not, whether as *men* we accept the Bible as God's Word or not, our unbelief will not change its true character and import; no further than our own individual profit and influence is concerned. There is a power attending its utterance and use, which the boldest adversary cannot withstand. It is rightly termed the "Sword of the Spirit," for with it the simplest minded christian, using it in the energy of the Holy Ghost, can confound the most profound and crafty opposers. We need not human reason to meet Satanic

arguments, for trusting to reason we are soon put to silence for reason unsanctified by grace is but flesh, which in its best estate, cannot withstand Satanic power. To God's Word we must refer for authority for what we set forth and claim it as the ground upon which to raise a barrier against the subtle opposition of Satanic power. Fidelity to God, is faithfulness to Him under a knowledge of His revealed will, working out under a sense of dependence. Infidelity (without faith), is a disregard of God's will, and a positive denial of those judgments and punishments which He is sure to visit upon those who scorn and neglect the offer of His Christ as a needed ransom for a lost and ruined race.

The origin of infidelity is set forth in the Word of God. The condition of Adam in Eden before sin came in, was that of perfect innocence, with every want supplied, and man constituted lord over all created things.—Gen. i. 28, 30.

Eve was taken out of Adam, and formed "bone of his bone," as a companion in this happy condition of innocence, and so long as they walked in obedience, God had communion and fellowship with them, for what he created was very good, and He cared for Adam and Eve, as the highest type of his own handiwork on earth. God establishes his authority over Adam, for without authority all is chaos and confusion, by giving a command: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii. 16, 17. Here was the command with the penalty attached, putting Adam into a place of responsibility and bringing in the character of disobedience as *sin* before God. But Satan tempts the woman to believe that God had kept back the best tree from their use. "Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He feigns ignorance by

this question, and when Eve repeats God's command with the penalty modified to "lest ye die," Satan comes in with a positive denial of what God had said. Mark the influence he gets over the woman! "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." —Chap. iii. 4, 5." God's result of their disobedience was, "Ye shall surely die!" Satan's result is "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Thus the lie of the devil prevails over the weaker side of Adamic life in Eden. What is the result? Eve, by placing herself under the power of God's enemy sees in the fruit the seducing character of the world in which we are now moving. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband and he did eat. (Verse 6). It was the power the serpent gained over the weaker vessel, that gave her a sight of the three things which characterise the world under Satan's rule, as opposed to God.

The tree was good for food, here is the lust of the flesh. It was pleasant to the eyes, here you get the lust of the eye. It was a tree to be desired to make one wise, and here the pride of life. If we turn to 1 John ii. 16, we see these three things, "which are not of the Father but are of the world," and christians cautioned against loving the world, or the things which characterise it, for they are of Satanic origin, and came in as a result of sin. Death, is God's penalty upon Adam and Eve for disobedience, for *the wages of sin is death*. Satan is the one who holds the power of death, and our first parents, by putting themselves under his power, and committing sin, get the wages due to those who disobey God and serve the devil. It is in this spirit of disobedience that unregenerate

man acts and brings forth sin instead of fruit unto God, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and bears that character before God. "Without faith we cannot please God," and the characteristic of infidelity as well as of idolatry, is to walk and estimate from the sight of the eye and not by faith. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves to make aprons to cover their shame and guilt, *for in consequence of knowing good and evil they had a guilty conscience.* Gen. iii. 7. Here is the uneasiness of the natural heart set forth as it labors in its own strength to *do* something to hide its own lack of perfection, from the justice and condemnation of God. Adam and Eve knew they had disobeyed God, hence their miserable attempt to evade the responsibility of rendering an account, and the displeasure of God which must result from their sin. Man in Adam owns his need, in his very attempts to satisfy God by good works in the energy of the flesh, he says by his restless fleshly activity "something is wrong and I must do the best I can to set it right," and the fig leaves of self righteousness are the result. But God condemns their device, calls them to account and gives Adam, Eve, and the Serpent each their sentence. Adam by the sweat of his brow must eat of the fruit of a cursed earth ; Eve must have sorrow and conception multiplied, and be a subject to her husband's rule, while the Serpent was cursed above all beasts, and sentenced to crawl upon its belly. Vers. 14-20.

But what does God do in marvellous condescending grace so like Himself. "Unto Adam also and unto his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." v. 21. Of that, which resulted from the death of the animals, the skins, a covering was made, which was according to God's mind, a striking type of God's Lamb which was to be offered as a sacrifice and substitute for sinful man on the cross. What a rebuke to the busy activity of man's self-righteous, legal heart.

We get the origin of infidelity and all its multifarious phases, in the principle of disobedience. God commands and Satan suggests, and Satan is believed instead of God. God's love and tender mercy, is quite acceptable to all propagators of false doctrine, as it bears with their perverseness and headstrong wills; and they can talk eloquently about His love, but touch the question of His justice and they rebel at once. To vindicate his own character and be consistent with Himself, God must deal in judgment with sin; and judgment is called in His Word, His "strange work," for it is foreign to His nature for *God is Love*. But Satan and wicked men have forced God to deal in judgment, and it is because infidels refuse to own the judged condition of man in Adam, that they deny God's justice and try to exalt man into a position of favor and consequence before Him contrary to His estimate. Each of the different phases and forms of unbelief extant, present some central thoughts of Satanic suggestion, around which their followers gather and fortify their minds against the Word of God. It may be well to present here in brief some of the leading characteristics of the different forms of unbelief to prove the above assertion. Take for example, *Unitarianism*.—It positively denies the need of Christ as a sacrifice on the cross, to atone for sin, rejects His divinity and reduces Him to the standard of a mere man in the flesh. It does this while it talks about God, proving that its followers "profess that they know God while in works they deny Him." In denying the divinity of Christ surely they are far from God, for it is only he that hath the Son, that hath the Father also. Unitarianism is a solemn theological cheat, a device to present a semblance of belief in God, while it sets aside Christ in His true character who is the very ground of faith and reconciliation to God the Father. A glance at *Universalism*, shows it to be another crafty effort on man's part to evade

God's solemn, unerring judgments upon the wicked. It encourages the natural out-cropping of man's sinful nature, by setting aside the word, respecting God's everlasting punishment of the wicked in the lake of fire. God's word about judgment and the punishment of the wicked in the lake of fire, is as positive as it is in setting forth His love. Universalists deny the fall of man in Adam, and by so doing, virtually set aside the need of Christ as a sacrifice for sin. Sin, as to its hateful nature in the sight of God is not acknowledged by them, because they have not the light of the Holy Spirit, which alone can reveal the true character of sin in its opposition to God. It is only by being born again by the Word, and the Spirit, that men can lay claim to Christianity at all, and the new birth, Universalists practically deny. Its position and teachings are thus opposed to God.

Spiritualism, is a modern out-growth of man's uneasy natural heart, energized by Satan to manifest error and propagate opposition to God's Word and work. It is evidently ancient witch-craft cropping out under a new dress, and assuming a less repulsive form, that it may the more effectually lure a greater number of followers into its pernicious train. Distraction of mind and disorder of life, is the result of yielding to the vagueries which its supporters set forth, and the insane asylums reap a large share of patronage when it brings forth its repulsive fruits. This may seem like severe dealing, but it is what it deserves.

Mormonism, is a modern phase of Mahomedanism, and upon the crime of polygamy, as a basis, is bringing forth a generation of illegitimate creatures to fill the records of crime and social disorder. It has its headquarters in Utah in the United States, and sends out its missionaries to all parts of the world to lure poor credulous people, (chiefly women), into its ungodly courses. They misrepresent the life they will lead when they get to the head quarters of the "Latter Day

Saints," as they style themselves, and when the poor dupes arrive there, they are treated more like slaves than otherwise, and subjected to the most flagrant outrages. Not having the means of returning, these deluded ones are forced to drag out a life of misery, under masters who only have their lusts and passions to satisfy, and who adopt any base means necessary to carry on their infernal social schemes of luring souls down to crime and perdition. All should be warned and armed against its ungodly allurements.

Annihilationism, is another false scheme of man's naturally obdurate heart, devised to evade judgment. It is but a poor panacea to that end however, as it teaches non-existence after death, and affords no place of rest for the poor heart that has grown weary of life, under the bondage and oppression of Satan. He so employs agencies and temptations to plunge his subjects into sin, that he may burden existence and create desires for non-existence, and then causes them to imagine that there will be no life after the death of the body. Mark reader, this is Satan's work, and just the opposite of the life that is produced in the soul by faith in Christ. But God's own word plainly shows that there will not only be existence after death, but at the great White Throne judgment after the millennium reign closes, the wicked dead will be raised *in bodies*, and after they have heard their sentence out of the books that then will be opened, they will be cast into the lake of fire. Rev. xx. 11-15. What a solemn undeniable proof is here presented, that Annihilationism is utterly false. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*." That is, at the Great White Throne the wicked dead will be raised to suffer in bodies in the lake of fire eternally. As it is in the body that sin is committed, so it is in a body that the wicked are to suffer the justice of an offended God. So the christian gets a glorified body in which to enjoy the presence of Christ and the glory of the Father.

Darwinism or Progressiveism. The principle of Progressiveism, or improvement of the natural man in the flesh, is gaining head in the form of the organization of men and women, into what are called "Progressive Societies." Their aim is evidently to set the need of revelation aside and substitute a rationalism based upon such authority as Paines "Age of Reason," and the Darwinian theory of a man springing from an ape or a baboon. It is astonishing what theories men will invent for the purpose of trying to set aside God's account as given in His word ! Instead of the lying account which Satan puts into the hearts of rebellious men, may the Lord give us to trust His account and hold fast the faithful word, despite all the superbly false inventions of those who would rather believe and circulate a lie than the truth. *Antinomianism*, is a perversion of the doctrine of election, and is set forth by men who have not believed unto salvation, or having believed, are willing to justify themselves in sin by claiming that they will be saved at all events, let them do what they will. This is "doing evil that good may come, whose condemnation is just." While the doctrine of the choice or election of the church of Christ in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world, is not only a scriptural, but a soul-comforting doctrine, it by no means opens a license to sin, with the expectation that God will save at all hazards, and thus allow the old nature in the christian to bring forth its pernicious fruits. "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous," and further, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Antinomianism would recklessly set aside the gracious provision for the need of failing Christians, and justify sin in a presumptuous dependence upon God's long-suffering and tender mercy. We might enumerate other fallacious doctrines which have sprung up in an organized form to resist God's Word, but

we give the reader a test from that Word by which to detect false doctrine. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Anti-Christ whereof ye have heard that it shall come; and even now already is it in the world."—1 John iv. 3. The very spirit of pride which first brought in rebellion and cast Satan out of Heaven, was reproduced in Eve when she tasted the forbidden fruit, and now characterizes the different forms of unbelief. This innate pride, which comes in as the result of sin, stands between the soul of the unbeliever and God, for it prevents him seeing his lost condition in the old Adam and his need of Christ as an Atoning Sacrifice. Instead of accepting God's estimate of the old Adam nature as "dead in trespasses and sins," both as to standing and fruit, clever and ambitious men, puffed up by knowledge and spiritual pride, set about working out theories of progress and inherent human goodness, which only reveals the solemn fact that they have a sense of lack in their own souls, and that some thing must be done to improve man as a creature. Alas! for human expediency and clever devices for human improvement. But "let God be true, though every man be a liar," for His Word is "yea and amen in Christ Jesus," in whom was no failure. And when we reflect on the wondrous grace and mercy which has followed man through all his wanderings and headstrong opposition to God, how thankful ought we to be that a testimony is preserved of the source of it all, in the gift of His well beloved Son. The scathing, sweeping blasts of infidelity, would demolish every land-mark of faith by scandalous denials of God's Word, and substitute if they could, the empty, virtueless speculations of corrupt conscience-seared minds. God's promise to Adam after his sin had expelled him from Eden was, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the Serpent's head." This promise was kept

good to man, until Christ came as the embodiment of grace and truth, as the One who could stand between fallen man and an offended God, One in Whom the sinner could be reconciled to the God against whom he had sinned, and a way of escape opened up from the lake of fire, which was created for Satan and his angels. What a God we have reader ! What do you think of His Christ ? Is He to you the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely ? Have you realised your need as a lost sinner in the old Adam condition, and accepted Him as your Sacrifice and substitute ? Or is He to you as the One who will come to you as a judge in consequence of your rejection of Him ? Ponder this question seriously, as it is important to you as a test to your soul.

CHAPTER II.

Cain and Abel and their offerings—God's estimate of man before the flood—The building of Babel and the idolatry of the nations—The calling of Abraham—Review of principles.

The first two children born of Adam and Eve, brought each an offering to God, under a sense of need, for with the fall, man got a conscience which in its activity creates a sense of want in the soul. These two offerings, present a strong contrast, between the efforts of fallen man to do *something* worthy of God's approval, and the place of faith which says, "I can do nothing apart from God's plan and ways." "Abel was a keeper of sheep, Cain was a tiller of the ground, and in process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain, and to his offering, He had not respect. And Cain was very wrath and his countenance fell. Gen. iv, 2, 4. Why did God show this preference ? Cain brought the fruit of the earth as it was, with the curse

upon it ; he also brought that which was the result of his own labor. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock, in which was life that God alone could give "for the life is in the blood." Abel presented to God that which was purposed as a type of the One Seed, whom He had promised Adam should bruise the Serpents head. Cain's offering was on the ground of works, but Abel's offering was purely on the ground of faith. Cain was wroth through envy, that his work had been set aside, and a simple offering of faith instead, had been received. "And the Lord said unto Cain, why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin, (or a sin offering in margin), lieth at the door." Gen. iv. 6, 7. Here was God's provision for Cain, in case he failed in his efforts to *do well* in his own strength. God would accept a sin offering from him, as well as from Abel, if he failed on the ground of works. But did Cain succeed in his doing well? Let God's Word tell the story of his failure. "And Cain talked with Abel his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not : am I my brothers keeper? (vers. 8, 9.) Here is the issue of Cain's efforts to do well, or to live by law keeping, for this is the principle standing out in Cain's offering. By endeavoring to "do the best he can" as many say now-a-days, he ends in becoming a murderer, and is driven out from God's presence with a curse and a mark upon him, (vers. 11-15.) Abel's offering set forth the principle of faith, "by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts ; and by it he being dead, yet speaketh." Heb. xi, 4. His faith laid hold of the promise according to God's mind, but Cain trusted in his own work, and came under condemnation. And this is just what the natural man does, in-

stead of, in faith, accepting the work wrought out on Calvary in the person of Christ for his salvation, he denies God's account, refuses His estimate of the natural man as a lost sinner in the old Adam state, and sets about to invent a plan of his own to work up a stock of excellence out of that which God has condemned. We see them, all mankind out of Christ, unawakened, as dead in trespasses and sins running in the course of Cain, and in the same spirit of selfishness and defiance to God asking by their acts and lives, "am I my brother's keeper?" Pride, self will, ambition to excel in the world's estimation of excellence, and every conceivable shape which the flesh can present its pretensions to importance, are set forth in the most enticing forms to ensnare the heart and keep faith from acting in any way. All the systems of infidelity, whether they take a religious form, or more openly and scandalously deny God and His Word entirely, are prolific in schemes for law keeping and setting the natural man to work out a degree of excellence, apart from faith. It is natural for man to act independent of God, and to endeavor by law works and fleshly efforts, to bring God in debtor, which it is impossible for God to acknowledge, as He has long since declared the flesh as of no value in His sight. The violence and bloodshed which characterized the antedeluvians, drew from God the just sentence that "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold I will destroy them with the earth," Gen. iv, 13. For in verse 5, we read, "and God saw that the wickedness of men was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was only evil continually.*" This was God's estimate of man when He resolves to destroy him off the face of the earth, and He declares (v. 3.) that his "days shall be one hundred and twenty years," just the length of time Noah was building the Ark to pass through the judg-

ment in safety with his family. As soon as the keel of Noah's Ark was laid, he preached the coming judgment. The idea of a man building a huge vessel, upon dry land, far from the sea shore, was no doubt a strange one to natural judgment, and seemed very absurd to the antedelvians, but, no more so than that of preaching a crucified and risen Christ for salvation to the natural man now, if he allow his reason to work and bring in a human estimate of what God has wrought. Faith lays hold of what God has said, and is thankful for deliverance through a divinely accomplished work in Christ, but human reason attempts to measure God's work and purposes, from a human stand point, and signally fails, for the finite cannot grasp and comprehend the Infinite. So before the flood we have the flesh thoroughly condemned by God the Father, after He had tested it by its legitimate fruits, which were violence and bloodshed. The great fulcrum upon which Satan works his mighty lever of unbelief, is SELF WILL. God's Word makes little of man in any way *as man* but failure, and self-will in man loves exaltation, which begets pride and earthly consequence, and that God hates. It follows of course, that unbelief and hardness of heart are the result of self will acting. Noah's carpenters or helpers in building the Ark, typified a large class of people in these days. Many are active in forwarding enterprises to spread the truth, who will not have Christ for themselves, to meet their own individual need as a Saviour? They are much concerned about the poor heathen in far off lands, while at heart they despise the blessed Lord. But then it is a respectable thing to be acting with good people in doing good, as they say, while at heart, like Noah's carpenters they laugh at the apparent (to them) foolishness of preaching the gospel. Noah's carpenters got their day's pay, and these apparently well doers, get patronage, and a respectable reputation to help them on in the world,

and that is their main object. Reader are you like Noah's carpenters?

After the flood, Noah and his family go out to people the earth with the principle of retribution to prevent violence and bloodshed which existed before the flood. God puts the sword of government into Noah's hand as it were, and says: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God, made He^e man. And you, be ye fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply therein." Gen. ix. 6, 7. But Noah plants a vineyard, drinks of the wine thereof, becomes a drunkard, and Ham is cursed for beholding his father's nakedness in the tent while intoxicated, vers. 22-26. So man sadly fails again as head of a new order of things, as did Adam and Eve. Noah had been placed lord over all created things, as Adam had before him, but sin came in and spoiled the trust that God had placed in him, another proof of the inherent failing tendency of man *as man*.

The lapse of time brings a multitude of people into existence again upon the earth, and what is the prominent land-mark of man's weakness and presumption, do we see? He has a desire to reach heaven, as as every unregenerate heart now has in *some way*. There is an unsatisfied vacancy in the heart of every one born into the world which nothing but Christ can fill. But instead of having Him to fill it, the great bulk of mankind run after something else for satisfaction. Some seek wealth, some political distinction, others military glory, others again, pleasures and sensuality, others fame in various avenues of effort, but ah! how *few*, compared to the great stream that is rushing down to judgment, are willing to accept Christ, the One who can fully satisfy? This intense desire for Heaven, evinced itself in the descendants of Noah in an attempt to build a tower upon which they expected to reach it, Gen. xi. 1-6. But God confounded

their language and scattered them, and their tower stood unfinished, a striking proof of the restless ambition of man to attain to a place of excellence and happiness by his own efforts. Their tower was called "Babel," meaning confusion, and is a fair representation of the result of all of man's self exaltation. In stead of laboring to glorify God, they say: "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto Heaven, and *let us make us a name*, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth," (v. 4.) And this is the ultimate of man in his own strength, to exalt himself and leave God out of the question, just the opposite of what God created him for. The world is full of modern Babel-builders, with their various projects and schemes to attain to a high state of perfection and to make a *name*. This making a name among men, is a cunning snare of Satan to detract from the importance of trusting Christ, and looking to Him for grace to "serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven." It matters not what man occupies himself with, in Satan's account, if he turns his back upon God and His gracious offers of salvation in Christ. Everything out of Christ, bears the character of Babel building, and will end in confusion, and banishment from God. Idolatry characterised the nations after the confusion of Babel. The natural tendency to worship *something*, in the heart of man, produced objects which the eye can see, as *sight* is the characteristic of the Adam nature, as *faith* is of the new life in Christ. So after the flood we have "god's many" and all turning from the living and true God. It was in this idolatrous, infidel, unbelieving condition of things, that God came in and chose Abraham out as a man of faith. He is called in scripture "the father of the faithful." And why? Others had acted in faith before him, but Abraham's faith "was counted unto him for righteousness" and marks him out in an especial way

as an example of faith in all times to come. And God proved him in the path of faith too, when He commanded him to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering. No other man's faith was tried like Abraham's. He did not let him *say* he had faith without proving him in the path. Abraham in obedience, gets a great name, for God promises to make his name great and to make him a blessing, Gen. xii. 2, 3. How different from the builders of Babel who were to make a great name by their own efforts. These get confusion, while Abraham gets blessing, just the difference between sight and faith. The infidel (or unbeliever) will accept nothing but what his eyes can see, or his senses realize, but the man of faith sees nothing with his natural eye of what he accepts upon trust from God, by resting in His promises. The infidel's portion as he sees it, is passing away, going on to judgment, but the believer in God's promises has "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" for him, a portion in Christ that never ends. What an overwhelming thought! Dear reader! what are *you* striving for as you tarry for a short space of time in this shifting scene? Is it for some of its paltry things that perish with the using? Do they engross your heart, instead of a rich and precious portion in the person of Christ? Remember it is *here* that the matter is to be decided between you and God. You "brought nothing into this world, and it is certain you can carry nothing out," and if "in this life only you have hope in Christ, you are of all men most miserable." If you have not learned what a flimsy, bootless portion you get from your own works out of Christ, accept the fact now that "by the works, of the law, no *flesh* shall be justified," and that "the just shall live by faith," and you have the matter at once decided between you and God.

CHAPTER III.

Israel as a nation under the law. God's provision and man's necessity. The utter failure of the flesh to please God. Reflections.

We pass hastily over the history of Abraham's descendants, until we come to the deliverance of the nation of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. There is much in the history of Jacob and Esau, to illustrate the lines of contrast between faith and sight, but space will not permit more than a passing reference. "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," is the expression of God's prerogative, in carrying out His own purposes in the lives of the two sons of Isaac, and it matters not how much the reasoning flesh in infidel, may cavil at the management of Rebecca and Jacob, God allowed it, in order to accomplish His own lines of purpose in the lives of Jacob and Esau. Jacob, like Abel, represents the choice and favour of God, while Esau, as Cain, shows the course of the Adam nature. God wisely maintains His prerogative to make His own choice in His instruments of mercy and usefulness. He does not see as man sees, according to the flesh. This is one of the most prominent stumbling blocks to the propagators of unbelief, and they accuse a wise and faithful God, of partiality and inconsistency, because He claims the right to choose or refuse whom He will. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to choose one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" "Who art thou O man that repliest against God?" What a deeply solemn thing it is to judge God and cast back in His face the ungodly murmurings of a corrupt, perverse and fallen nature. What a heinous thing sin must be in the sight of a holy God, who cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. And when we remember that disobedience is the origin of sin, and reflect too that it is man alone of all God's created universe that *can* sin, how deeply it should concern us to point

the way to avoid it, while we are left here among our fellow men. Christ is that way, not only for past sins committed, but as an Advocate, if they sin, for all who accept Him as their needed Saviour. Joseph, going down into Egypt, and as a man of faith, serving in the purpose of God as a type of Christ, presents another instance of God's power in defeating the ends and aims of the flesh, and turning them to account in forwarding His own glorious ends. It is only by being in the path of faith ourselves, that we are able to understand in any degree, how and why God deals in the choice of His own instruments to carry out His purposes. The natural man cannot do anything but cavil and murmur, thus proving that "there is a path that the vultures eye hath not seen or the lion's whelp hath not known," and this may apply to the path of faith, that the infidel and promulger of false doctrine knows nothing of. Jacob and his sons and grandchildren, in all about seventy persons, go down into Egypt as a family, but in time become a nation, which God regards as His own nation, "chosen from the foundation of the world," as had been promised to Abraham that God would make him a great nation, and his name great. When they were forcibly enslaved by the king of Egypt, God hears their cry for deliverance and raises up a deliverer in the person of Moses. So great had the persecution against them become through the jealousy of the Egyptian king, that he gave orders that the male children of the Israelites should be put to death, Exodus i, 16. But God ordered the circumstances of Moses' birth and infancy, so that he was taken and cared for by the king's daughter and grew to manhood in the household of the king, chap. ii, 1-11. By faith, as led of God, "Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming

the reproach of Christ of greater riches than the treasures in Egypt ; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king : for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible," Heb. xi, 24-28. Here was a man of faith, leaving all the tempting offers of sight, and enduring as "seeing Him who is invisible." This is just the opposite of man in nature acting according to the estimate of the flesh. Moses leaves Egypt, and spends forty years at the backside of the desert in Midian, learning in God's school the needed lessons to become a leader of Israel from the land of Egypt. God delivered the nation with a high hand and outstretched arm, using Moses as an instrument to lead them, (Ex. xii, 51.) and brought them to Mount Sinai, (chap. xix, 2) where He put His promise before them as follows : "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, an holy nation," chap. xix, 5, 5. And the boast of the people went back to the Lord, "all that the Lord hath spoken will we do," (v. 8.) Ah vain boast of nature to *do* what God requires, in its own strength. By the time the commandments of God's law reached them at the hands of Moses, they had erected an idol of gold in the form of a calf, and were shouting, "These be thy gods O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," (chap. xxxii, 4.)

What a humiliating fact for the boasters in human excellence to contemplate ! In this act of foolish idolatry, we have the natural outcropping of the human heart, worshipping a senseless piece of metal fashioned by human skill ! Alas for natural goodness in the face of such fruit. Moses, before going back to the mount to confess the sin of the people, calls to the people in the gate of the camp : Who is on the Lord's

side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves unto him, (verses 2-6.)

The next order is for the execution of judgment, and is very significant in accordance with God's dealings with sin. And he said unto them, (the Levites,) thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate, throughout the camp and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses, and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men, (vs. 27, 28.) From this time forth, instead of the nation being a "kingdom of priests," that would have resulted from their obedience as a nation, the priesthood was confined to the family of Levi. The nation at large could only approach God henceforth, through the priesthood, of the tribe of Levi, which had been faithful to God in the execution of judgment when the sin of idolatry came in.

The second tables of law, as we say, came from God in pure grace, for the nation had forfeited all claim upon His love and care, through their sin. Grace, is love manifested where condemnation is merited. So it was grace on God's part, to open up a way of expiation from sin, through a priesthood and sacrifices, and what is known as ceremonial *law*, bears the character of *grace*, for God acts in answer to the intercession of Moses for the people. It was under this provision for man's necessity under law, that brought the children of Israel through the wilderness to the borders of the land, which He had promised to Abraham and his seed forever. As they approach the land the Lord directs Moses to send one man from each of the twelve tribes, to spy it out, (Numb xiii, 1-20.)

The spies return, bringing with them the grapes of Eschol and other evidences of the riches of the land, but all but two, Caleb and Joshua, protested against

going into the land. They plead that the Anakim giants were there, that the land devoured the inhabitants thereof, that the cities were walled and very great, and the character of their report was evil generally, (vs. 29-33.) Now came a test of the nation's faith. "And all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron, and the whole congregation said unto them, would God that we had died in Egypt, or would God that we had died in this wilderness," chap. xiv. 1, 2. And so they murmured on, a fair example of the uneasy, disobedient heart of man, as he cavils against God, and resists the wise provision that God has made for his deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the enjoyment of His wondrous grace and love. This is the return they make to God, for all the care He had exhibited in bringing them from the bondage of Egypt, and up to the borders of the land of promise. But such is man in his best estate, acting in nature and apart from God. The people would rather believe the lying ten with their evil report, than the faithful two who acted for God and in the strength of His promises. Alas! for man in nature under the headship of the first Adam is "prone to do evil as the sparks fly upward." These ten lying spies, were forerunners of a large class of people in these days, who are constantly resisting and casting back a lie in the face of God, in contrast to those ^{who} like Caleb and Joshua act in faith and inherit the promises. But how does God answer the unfaithfulness of the nation? Solemn question for those who are now "going in the way of Cain, and running after the error of Balaam for reward," and who if they continue in their present head-strong course, "will perish in the gainsayings of Core," or of Korah and his company. Moses pleads for the people with all the fervency that an intercessor could, vs. 13-19, and God consents to spare the nation but

takes them back into the wilderness for forty years, until the carcasses of all who came out of Egypt of over twenty years old, should fall in the wilderness, "save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun," verse 30. "And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise," vs. 33, 34. And further, the ten men or lying spies who brought up the evil report, died of the plague then and there before the Lord, verse 37. With this deeply solemn record before us, can we but wonder, when men with oily speech and talented minds, enlarge so eloquently upon God's love, mercy and providential care, and yet sarcastically and sneeringly deny His judgments? Ah, righteousness is at the right hand of God and now God is dealing in mercy and grace, but that MAN will come to reign whom God hath ordained to rule the world and then the door of grace and mercy will close, and sin will be met with its punishment as soon as it is committed.

All who do not bow the knee now in the day of grace will be *forced* to bow in judgment, but they get *then*, the lake of fire which was created for Satan and his angels, and which wicked man gets as a result of believing the lie of Satan instead of the truth of God concerning His Son. The condemnation now comes in because "light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." St. John iii, 17. Christ died to take away the *sin* of the world, that is, the old root which produces the root *sins*, but it is only for those who trust the blood, that His death avails as to sins committed. So an infant is saved if it dies before God holds it accountable for the commission of sins. Judgment is passed

upon the wicked at the great White Throne *according to their works*, or according to the commission of sins as responsible persons. John said to the disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the *sin* (not sins) of the world," St. John i, 29. This "sin" as to the world is what came in when Adam transgressed, and is met in the person of Christ, when He as God's Lamb, as a Sacrifice was put to death on the cross, the efficiency of which, avails for true believers, when they individually by faith, accept Him as the One provided to meet their individual need. This becomes simple and plain to all who *do* accept Him as such by faith, but to those who stop to cavil and reason out the matter with God, it becomes a perfect puzzle, and foolishness to the worldly wisdom of the Gentile, as well as a stumbling-block to the unbelief of the Jew. The reason of this is, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii, 14. A work must be wrought in the believer in answer to faith, before the Holy Spirit can make the things of God plain to the understanding. "As it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of *man* (and here we have the natural man's position defined,) what God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto *us* (as believers) by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," vs. 9, 10. The Apostle brings the cross of Christ in as the answer to all the wisdom of the natural man, and shows that the height of human wisdom is but foolishness with God, and all the lofty flights of man's self exaltation in presenting his thoughts in contrast to God's thoughts, merely have the effect to put man down where he truly belongs before God, that is, "that every mouth may be stopped" in God's presence, both Jew and Gentile.

The Jews as a nation, enter the land under the leadership of Joshua who stands as a type of Christ in delivering from the power of sin. Moses as head of the law could not take the nation into the land and present a perfect type of deliverance, for the law does not deliver, it only condemns. "The law made nothing perfect, but bringing in a better hope did." So Joshua takes the leadership, as one who had been faithful in every place of trust which had been committed to him, and carries the nation through the Jordan, as a type of Christ the true Deliverer, who alone can take man from his lost estate and bring him into a place of safety free from the punishment due to sin and all its dire consequences. Under the law, we get the solemn and irreversible decree, that God will by *no means clear the guilty*. What a stunning blow is this, to all efforts of the flesh and nature to please God by "doing the best they can," as they say. Further, "if you offend in one point you are guilty of all." Here again is a bar that renders the cause of the mere moralist and legalist, hopeless in the extreme. God leaves no breach in His wall of defence, for the busy flesh in man to enter and glory in His presence. As much as man has failed in every place of trust, God is true and faithful, and in the person of Christ, will complete all man has failed to carry out, in the "dispensation of the fulness of times," or the millennium. Christ will restore, as the true Adam, all that pristine freshness which existed in Eden before the fall. The ferocity of the wild beasts will give place to domestic obedience, for "the wolf and the lamb shall lie down together," the "weaned child shall place his hand upon the cockatrice's den and the lion shall be made to eat grass as the ox." These millennial features, speak of Adam's *time* being filled up by Christ the true Restorer. Then as Noah failed with the sword of governmental retribution in his hand, Christ the true Noah will rule in equity, and fill up what was lost by

Noah's failure as a responsible servant of God. And as Israel as a nation failed under the law, Christ will restore them as a nation, and "write His law in their hearts," will "take away their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh," thus completing, as God's perfect man, all the times or dispensations which have been left a failure in the hands of man. What especially important lesson do we glean, by Israel's history under the law? Simply that by the law is the knowledge of sin, therefore "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified," Rom. iii, 20. Reader, have you learned the lesson? The law, which as a natural man you endeavor to keep, but in vain, only comes up against your crooked failing nature, as a straight rule beside a crooked wall, to manifest to you, your need of Christ as a sacrifice and Saviour. If you are trying to build a Tower of Babel upon the flimsy foundation of human effort, forbear! you will fail!

"Cast your deadly doings down, down at Jesus' feet,
Rest in Him, in Him alone, gloriously complete."

Remember, that the same God who, if you put yourself under law, will not clear the guilty, condescends in Christ, to "justify the ungodly." Are you willing to take your place as one of the ungodly?

The Lord Jesus refused to hear the cry of the woman of Canaan when she called Him "Son of David," which was His Jewish title, but as soon as she took her place as a Gentile "dog," and addressed Him as "Lord," *then* He heard and answered her, Mat. xv, 22-28. If you are trying to mend up an old condemned Adam nature, to make it acceptable to God, by any theories of man, be they never so clever and apparently *reasonable* to human understanding, you will only end in disappointment and despair. You cannot put the new wine into the old bottles, or the new cloth upon the old garment with any hope of success. God has His way of bringing rebellious man into a reconciled position to Himself, and will only

receive man through the acceptance of His Christ. He says to the sinner : " I am well pleased with My Son, sinner are you ? If so we are agreed and reconciled ! " Salvation, at the outset is as simple as that, reader will you have it if you have not already accepted it. By accepting the finished work of Christ, on the cross *for you*, you have peace *with* God. When you apprehend your standing as perfect in Him, you have the peace *of* God. While you are walking along in obedience and communion with Him, " the *God of peace* delights to dwell with and bless you." Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

God's dealings with the Jews in the land, and their unfaithfulness. The " Times of the Gentiles." The advent of our Lord Jesus Christ and His rejection. Character of His opposers.

The children of Israel passed through the Jordan preceeded by the Ark of the covenant, and as at the Red Sea the waters of the Jordan were stayed until they passed through dry shod, Joshua iii, 16, 17. We know that this fact recorded in scripture, like the account of the miracles the Lord performed in the sight of His earthly people, the Jews, is a prominent stumbling block to infidelity, but there is the fact as proof of God's care for His people, and all the cavilling of sceptics cannot overthrow it.

The twelve stones taken up out of the Jordan and planted at Gilgal, were memorials to succeeding generations of the passage of that river. They present a strong proof of the authenticity of God's record, and when viewed as land-marks of His dealings, aid much to substantiate the claims of the Word of God upon the credulity and reverence of man.

After the Jews, under Joshua, had driven out the greater number of the natives of the land, and were fairly settled in possession, but a short time passed

ere they became disobedient and idolatrous, and consequently they were overcome by the adjoining nations and brought into bondage. No less than seven times were they allowed to fall into the hands of the nations around as a punishment for their sins, and seven times God raised up means for their deliverance, in answer to their cry of repentance. How wondrous is the grace that flows out to meet the sigh of contrition, and the yearnings of the sorrowing, repentant heart.

When we review the dealings of God with Israel, after they were in the promised land as a nation, well may we sing,

“How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end.”

Stiff-necked and rebellious as the Jews were, with so many evidences of God's love and power displayed among them, with what wondrous matchless grace He bore patiently with all their ill manners and crooked ways, meeting their need in so many forms of guardian care, and displaying such marvellous power and wisdom in their deliverance. The Lord left several nations in the land to prove the Jews, (Judges iii, 1-5.) and in answer to their disobedience and idolatry, allowed them to be thrown into bondage under the king of Mesopotamia, under Eglon king of Moab and the Philistines. In each deliverance through which Israel as a nation passed, individuals, *as instruments*, were especially raised up and endued with power from God to accomplish the work. Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Barak, Gideon, Jephtha, Samson and Samuel, were each gifted with some peculiar power of strength, strategy or wisdom from God, that the deliverance of the nation might not rest in or be attributed to man, but owned of, and received from the One who had done so much for them and whom they had so often dishonored, whose counsels they had des-

pised, and whose commandments they had broken. All this brings out the faithfulness of God in contrast with the *un*faithfulness of man, and teaches the solemn lesson to our hearts, if we will but receive it, of the need of looking to Him for everything of any value, and of rejecting the lordly pretensions of man in his natural excellence, to satisfy the inner yearnings of the soul. Man out of Christ and apart from the power of the Holy Ghost, can only work upon the material creation, and bring forth, in intellectual pride, the uneasy aspirations of a fallen* corrupt nature; he cannot enter by faith, within the veil, and draw from Christ, that supply which enables him to bring forth fruit to the glory of God, and the real edification of his fellow christian. He cannot "work out" (or show forth) that salvation which he might receive, as "God works within to will and do of *His* own good pleasure," for he has nothing good of his own to work upon, for "what have we that we have not received." If we as instruments, are to work out, what God works within, He will not use us as such unless He has first prepared and fitted us for use. During Samuel's time, the nation of Israel asked for a king to judge them and to go out and fight their battles for them. They wished to be like the nations around, or in other words, conformed to the world. They were not satisfied with God's way of governing them through His own provided instrumentality, but they must trust in the strength and wisdom of man. This is quite in keeping with a departure from the path of faith, and simple dependence upon One that is mighty. We have seen how miserably they failed to keep the law they boasted they *could* keep, and now after a period of nearly four hundred years in the land, they step forth in their demands upon Samuel to give them a king, (1 Sam. viii, 6.) But Samuel being displeased prayed to the Lord, who said: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for

they have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected me*, that I should not reign over them," (v. 7.) Now this is very solemn, when we examine its real import. They had rejected God and were putting their trust in man. Their elders did not meet together and pray for guidance and direction from the Lord, in simple dependence upon Him in their need, but they looked around upon the nations who were governed by men and desired human government and guidance instead. But mark the sequel! And God said further to Samuel, "now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit *yet protest solemnly unto them*, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them," (verse 9.) Samuel in faithfulness tells them, that the king they desire, shall take their sons for his coachmen and horsemen, and appoint over them captains of thousands and fifties to do his work; would take their daughters to be his bakers and cooks, and seize upon the best of their fields, vineyards and oliveyards, and give them to his servants; in brief, he would oppress them and live upon their substance, until "ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you, and the Lord will not hear you in that day," (vs. 11-18.) Here was the solemn result of their rejection of God and trusting in man. Extortion, bondage, and anguish of heart, were the faithfully predicted consequences of their apostacy from their place as cared for by the Lord. This is just what always results from departure and disobedience. How faithfully solemn the lesson comes home to our souls as we meditate upon it! If we have taken up the path of faith with the blessed Lord, and then turned our eye from Him to walk again by sight, after what we see in a scene hastening on to judgment, what a sad picture of inconsistency and bondage we present. Alas for God's children who become infidel in practice through a failure to find a satisfactory portion in Christ, because they preferred their lusts, their pleas-

ures, and the smiles of a vain inconstant world that rejected Him. Israel in their choice of Saul, the son Cis, acted in the judgment of nature, for he was head and shoulders above his fellows, a fine specimen of physical perfection to suit the natural eye. This is quite in keeping with a judgment according to the flesh. Nature in man regards the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. "The lust of the eye" is one of three things that came in as a result of yielding to temptation. The forbidden fruit in Eden was "fair to look upon." That is what the world loves to do, to make an appearance. It "judges from appearance," quite the opposite from what God commands us to do, to "judge not from appearance, but judge righteous judgment." We can only judge righteously, but from God's stand-point. Any estimate of nature in us, is sure to be opposed to God's claims upon us as to His glory, and to our own soul's welfare and growth up into Christ, our Living Head in all things.

The nation of Israel found Saul all that Samiuel predicted. He led them on from one calamity to another until God brought David into the scene as a deliverer to the nation. David's first act was the slaying of Goliath, a noted Philistine giant.

Some of David's brothers, sons of Jesse, were in Saul's army, and the Philistines were menacing them. David, then but a youth, was sent by his father to see how his brothers fared. The huge giant Goliath came forth from the Philistine ranks every day, daring any one forth from the army of Israel to decide the battle by a personal encounter. As soon as David heard of it, his soul was stirred with indignation within him, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that dare defy the armies of the living God," was David's earnest inquiry, (1 Samuel xvii, 26) as he saw the men of Israel recoiling in fear, from the threatenings of the giant. This was a question to bring out the confidence of faith in the boy David. Eliab, his eldest brother, re-

proved him, but mark David's answer to the question, "Why camest thou down hither, &c." David replies, "What have I now done? *Is there not a cause?*" Surely there was a cause which was soon manifested. David's fearless inquiries soon reached the ears of Saul, who sent for him at once. David boldly tells Saul the king, (ah! true faith is always bold and fearless,) "Let no man's heart fail because of him (the giant) thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine," (v. 32) Saul doubts David's power, because of his youth, but David rehearses to him the account of his slaying the lion and the bear on the mountain when they came to attack his flock of sheep. "Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he *hath defied the armies of the living God*, (v. 36.) This was the language of faith, for it brought God into the question. The armies of the living God had been defied, and this was enough for faith to count upon to gain the victory. Saul's confidence was established as David assures him "that the Lord who delivered him out of the paw of the lion and the bear, would also deliver him from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said "go and the Lord be with thee," (v. 37.) Saul put an armor upon David, but he could not go in the armor for he had not proved it. Faith could not count on nature's provision for nature cannot bear the test brought to bear upon it. "And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherds bag which he had even in a scrip, and his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine," (v. 40.) How beautiful is faith acting through its chosen vessel. There was nothing in the simple shepherd boy with his staff and sling, for nature to count on for victory. The Philistine was coming forward clothed in a coat of mail, heavily armed and preceeded by his armor bearer to crush the youth with a single blow of his

heavy spear. And the Philistine disdainng David, said with a curse, "am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves? Come to me and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the fields." Then said David to the Philistine, "thou comest to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a shield, but I come to thee *in the name of the Lord of hosts*, the God of the armies of Israel whom thou hast defied. This day *will the Lord* deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee and take thine head from thee : and I will give the carcasses of the hosts of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel," (vs. 43-46.) Here was the boast of nature in contrast with the assurance of faith. Man was counting in his own strength to accomplish with weapons of his own devising, the overthrow of God's anointed instrument, whom God had chosen to vindicate His power on earth, and show that there was a God in Israel. What a picture for own hearts to meditate upon ! How encouraging to faith to mark the result ! God directs the stone from the sling of the boy to the forehead of the giant, and the monster falls forward on his face to the earth. David completes the conquest by cutting off the head of the giant with his own sword ! So God sometimes vanquishes His enemies with their own weapons. Reader are you a sceptic, an infidel, fighting against God and His Word ? If so remember that the scurrilous, sarcastic production of your headstrong will which you may put forth, will tend much to your overthrow, as it makes more apparent the corruption that is working in your own unregenerate heart. All who fight against God, however well they may be armed and equipped with the logic and reason of man, whatever giants they may be in intellect, education and talent, will find like Goliath of Gath, that simple and unpretending means, if directed by God, can overturn and

demolish their greatest pretensions. The faith of some unpretending David, can meet boldly, and with success, the most formidable array of human effort, and count on God to sweep it away, and teach every uncircumcised Philistine, (or infidel,) who dares to defy the armies of the living God, that there is a God in Israel who will defend His own cause and put every device of Satan and his instruments in wickedness to fault and annul its power. Israel's history presents many instances similar in character to this, of the transcendent power of faith over man and nature, and from which we might draw many valuable comparisons, did space permit. But we will but pause to speak of their latter history, while in favor in the land as a proof of God's sure visitation of judgment upon those who disregard His warnings and scorn His power. David succeeded Saul in power as king, and is spoken of as the man "after God's own heart," or God's choice, in contrast with Saul the people's choice. David was a type of Christ the true David, who will overthrow the willful king (of whom Saul was a type) in the last days, and bring in the millennial reign in true Solomon glory. The prophetic experiences of Christ, recorded in the Psalms of David, show David's heart to have been fitted by the Holy Ghost, for the work of preparing the nation of Israel for the reception of Christ when He came, had they been subject to the scripture which they had recorded of Him. David's trials and experiences which he passed through before coming into reigning power, were also preparative to the utterances which we find in the Psalms. How patient and faithful God has been with man in every dispensation in which He has placed him. Nothing has been omitted on God's part, in His desire to bring man up to something near the standard of appreciation, which He desires him to have of the value of His own Son to meet his need. But failure has characterized man through it all, and this humiliating fact is what God

would have us own and acknowledge, and take our place before Him with mouths stopped and faces in the dust, instead of puffing up human nature with false notions of excellence which do not belong to it at all. Departure from God characterized Israel through the history of the kings, as in that of the judges, until the nation was separated by rebellion of the ten tribes, leaving Judah and Benjamin only, true to the throne of David, (11 Chron. chap. 10.) For their idolatry, the rebellious ten tribes were carried away captive by the Assyrians, and later on, the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were taken captive by the king of Babylon for their pride. Previous to this, the Shechina or Glory, which had been the cloudy pillar by day, and the pillar of fire by night through the wilderness, and dwelt in the tabernacle and the temple after they were established in the land, was seen by Ezekiel in a vision, to rise up and go away into heaven. After this the nation was called Lo Ammi, (meaning not my people) because of their idolatry, pride and unfaithfulness. This proves the solemn fact that God will deal with sin among his own people. As Israel as a nation proved unfaithful, God transferred the power of earthly government to the Gentiles. The book of Daniel, presents the history of the preparations of Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonish king, to take his place as the first monarch under this important charge. The captive Jews were then in Babylon, and Daniel is one of their number who had been chosen by the order of the king, to be set apart from among the Jewish children, to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans, (Dan. 1-4.) "And Daniel had understandings in visions and dreams," (v. 17.) The king dreamed dreams which troubled him exceedingly, and one which went from him so that he could not remember it. He called his magicians and astrologers, to tell and interpret the dream, but they declared their inability to do so except the king

tell the dream. The King sent forth a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain, because they failed to tell and interpret the dream. This decree included Daniel and his companions, and he craved permission and time to tell and interpret it. He asked his companions to "desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret, that they should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon," (vs. 4-18.) The secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, and he praised the God of heaven for His wondrous power which He exhibits among the children of men. Daniel told the king's dream in effect as follows:—The king saw a great image with head of gold, with breast and arms of silver, with belly and thighs of brass, with legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. "And thou sawest till, that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were made of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron and the clay, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer thrashing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth," (Dan. ii, 31-36.) This was the dream and Daniel interpreted it as follows:—"Thou O king art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory. And whosoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold," (vs. 38, 39.) Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar as its first king, represented the head of gold of the great image, which as a whole, symbolizes Gentile dominion down to the coming of Christ, (here shewn as the stone cut out without hands,) who will brake the image by His own power, and reign through the millennium. The Medo-Persian empire

which overthrew and succeeded the Babylonian, represented the breast and arms of silver. The Grecian empire which succeeded the Medo-Persian, showed the belly and thighs of brass, while the Roman power which in turn overthrew the Grecian, clearly represented the legs of iron, while the feet of iron and clay are plainly seen in the mixed governments of the present day. The iron part of the feet, symbolizes the kingly, or executive portion of the various governments now, while the clay of the feet, show the representative portions. A steady declension has been going on, until now we have the proud, but erroneous assumption of man to sustain the right of choice by the people crying, "Vox populi, vox Dei," claiming the voice of the people to be the voice of God. So in these days, we have all manner of corruption brought into the representative portion of the government, proving it to be the *clay* of Gentile dominion, the least reliable in strength of any part of the image. It is in this last weak phase of Gentile dominion, that the wilful king is developed, and asserts his power to reign. How clearly this speaks of the coming of the Lord to take up the church "which is His body." How comforting to every intelligent lover of the blessed Lord, to realise that soon the journey in this world will end in the full fruition of the blessed hope now set before us of being with Himself. To be with Him ends all the toil and suffering of the pilgrimage in a scene that could not brook His presence and testimony, and it is to this, that the believer is pressing forward, as the "mark for the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus." What a glorious end of a weary pilgrimage here! What rich incentives to faithfulness, and yet how many of God's dear children plod on amid the poisoning influences of the scene through which they might shine as lights for their Lord, yet with their light hid, either under the bed of spiritual sloth, or the bushel of worldly gain. May the Lord's

own, awake and rouse up from among the dead in trespasses and sin around them, and shine for Him as lights in the world. In Israel's pride and idolatry, their infidelity to God is clearly manifested. So long as they were faithful, God cared for them and prospered them as His own, but alas! how prominently it is proved in their own history that "the way of the transgressor is hard." After seventy years of captivity in Babylon, the two tribes Judah and Benjamin, were brought back to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah, to rebuild the temple and city, as a preparation for the advent of Christ, according to the promise that the Jews were the nation through which the Messiah, or Saviour, should come to the world. In answer to this promise, every Jewish woman sought to become the mother of a son, hoping her offspring might prove to be the promised One, hence in Daniel's description of the disregard of the wilful king in the last days Christ is called "the desire of women." (Dan. ix, 37.) In due time Christ was born in a stable, "for there was no room for them in the inn," in Bethlehem, whether Joseph and Mary had gone to answer to the decree of Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And why, may we ask, was there no room for them in the inn? A solemn lesson both for the understanding and the heart, is taught by that inn at Bethlehem. In it we see the world represented in miniature. That which composes the world, and which was the result of the first act of sin in Eden, viz: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, made up the atmosphere and life of that inn, in which there was no room for the Lord Jesus.

We might have found the proud Jewish Pharisee, the profound Greek philosopher, and the accomplished Roman counsellor, great and wise ones of the world gathered there, producing most inappropriate social elements amid which the Lord of glory to be born! "Low lies *His* head with the beast

of the stall." Amid the quiet ruminating animals of the stable, creatures of His own mighty power, as a creator, a far more fitting reception for the Incarnate God, could be enjoyed by the simple adoring shepherds, who had been directed to the spot by His star in the east, and who had come to worship Him, (Mat. ii, 9-11.) What a theme for meditation is here, for the humble obedient heart! Look around you reader, and see how much this inn of Bethlehem, is reproduced in the world which would not have the Lord Jesus, and is responsible for His murder on the cross. It was these same proud religious Jewish Pharisees, wise ones of earth, and the power-loving Romans, that hung Him on the accursed tree. The infidelity and antagonism of man to God, is the same now, as when it clamored for the death of our blessed Lord. Ah! how solemn for us to think upon! This same sin-seared, corrupt, judgment-bound world, has not lost its hatred for God's Son, as of yore, but that hatred increases, as we near the margin when He will come forth and test everything in the light of His own blessed presence. But reader, as this inn has spoken thus to our understanding, has it no language for our hearts may we ask? Aye, indeed it has! How much of its three-fold corrupting power influences our habits, our desires, our associations, our whole life, day by day? How much of our precious time is daily consumed in satisfying "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and pride of life." How little is really spent in self-denying devotion to Christ, the One who had no place in the inn. Are we holding sweet communion with him, bidding him enter as he stands at the door of our hearts and knocks? How solemn this question comes home to you and me reader! How it does search us, to the innermost depths of our being, laying open our laggard hearts to the gaze of self-denying discernment that we may really understand our true position before God. Let us bear the searching, unpalatable though

it be, for we will surely profit by it before God. The character of the opposers to the blessed Lord while He was on earth, was purely satanic. It was a question of dominion with the Roman power then ruling, and of pride and legal self-righteousness on the part of the Jewish Pharisees. In the book of Revelation, (chap. xii, 4.) we read that "the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." The woman here symbolizes the *nation* of Israel, while the Roman power, represented by Herod, shows Satan's dominion. The man-child, who is "to rule all nations with a rod of iron," shows Christ, who after He rose from the dead, "was caught up unto God and to His throne," (v. 5.) Herod tried to get possession of the child Jesus in His infancy but God defeated him, (Mat. ii, 8.) He slew the innocent children of two years old and under, (v. 16) to destroy the Lord, but God had put it into the hearts of His parents to flee into Egypt and remain there with the child until Herod's death. (vs. 13, 14.) Thus was Satan's plan foiled, and Jesus grew to manhood. The proud Pharisaical Jews, overlooked the prophecies concerning His humble parentage, and were looking for a mighty conqueror who, as they expected, would shake off the galling Roman yoke, and restore to Israel the governing power, and place that nation at the head of the nations, as He will in the last days. They denounced Jesus as an imposter, and with a few individual exceptions, look upon Him as such now. "He came unto His own (nation the Jews) but His own received Him not." A few, a remnant of Israel did receive Him, and "to them gave He power to become the sons of God." (St. John i. 11, 12.) The seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy, (see Dan. ix. 24-26) we believe, was occupied by John and Christ's ministries, each $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, but the offer of the kingdom being rejected, the 70th week of grace is cancelled, and it becomes a

week of judgment in the last days when God will deal with the Jews for rejecting their Messiah. God always deals in mercy and grace first, but if He is treated with contempt, He deals afterward in judgment. Israel slew the prophets and would not have their true Messiah, and God must deal with them according to their deservings. So *now*, the gospel of His grace is going out to poor sinners, and if they accept the proffered sacrifice of Christ, and own Him as Lord, they will escape the judgment that will *surely be* the portion of those who will not have Him as Saviour. The character of His opposers while on earth, was thoroughly infidel to God who sent Him. It could not be otherwise, and the fact that He gave Himself up to be treated as they chose, showed that meekness and obedience prophesied of Him in the Psalms of David. Had the Jews been fully obedient to the prophecies which they possessed of Him, they could not have rejected Him. But their infidelity, which, as a nation, continues to this day, clamored for His death, and urged Pilate, the Roman Governor, to deliver Him to be crucified, instead of Barabus a robber! "Not *this man*, but Barabus," is their cry when a prisoner is to be released unto them at the feast. Thus Satanic agency, aimed to protect its own cause and interests, by putting to death the One, who by His pure life and example, was a constant rebuke to the sin and unbelief around Him. And so will it be toward those who faithfully stand up now for a rejected Christ. The *character* of the world and its lovers, are the same as of yore. Sin and unbelief is the same now as ever. Men talk of *progress* in civilization, &c. &c., and progress there is in satanic craft and cunning surely, but none toward God and in the things of God by the world. On the contrary there is plenty of occupation of mind, with materialistic themes and notions to keep out Christ, and a sense of their great need of Him as the sacrifice for sin.

CHAPTER V.

The promise of the Holy Ghost and His descent at Pentecost—His mission and rejection by Israel—Paul's ministry and the church of God—Messages to the seven churches in Asia—Reflections.

Before the blessed Lord suffered on the cross He promised to send the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to His disciples, after He should go to the Father, St. John xvi, 5-15. He anticipates His departure in the 16th and 17th chapters of St. John's gospel, but He will not leave His own comfortless, or without the promise of One who would not only comfort them but would "lead them into all truth." Three things this promised Comforter would do, viz : convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. "Of sin because they believed not on me ; of righteousness because I go to my Father, and ye shall see me no more ; of judgment because the Prince of this world is judged," verses 8-11. The condemnation of unbelievers is, because they believe not on the Son of God, St. John iii, 18, 19. Christ was preached after the Holy Ghost descended at Pentecost, and His rejection is the sin, or condemnation of those who believe not on Him. Righteousness in the person of Christ is at the right hand of God now, in this day of mercy and grace. Were God dealing in righteousness, as He will through the reign of Christ in the Millennium, sin would be dealt with as soon as committed. Righteousness prevailing is the result of God ruling in judgment. But the Prince or God of this world, "hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them," and bring them out of their condemned condition of unbelief, for through the various avenues of effort which he devises Satan creates in them a hatred to God, though God is extending His grace and mercy to all. The Prince of this world is judged because Christ is risen triumphant over all the power of Satan,

having as the stronger entered the house of the strong man and spoiled his goods. By going into death he has disarmed it of its terror for the believer, broken the power of the grave, and taken away the "fearful looking for of judgment which will devour the adversaries," for all who trust Him for salvation.

"He, hell in hell laid low ;
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew ;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew."

The mission of the Holy Ghost is, to "take out a people for the name of the Lord," as well as to "reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," thus fulfilling the double purpose of God to carry out the election of grace in the church and to testify against sin. His Word preached, "accomplishes that whereunto it is sent," and is attended with the power of the Holy Ghost to be a savior of life unto life to some, and of death unto death to others." *On God's part*, His Word is as valuable as a testimony to vindicate His own character as it is a means of saving souls. But the Jewish nation rejected the Holy Ghost as they did the true Messiah. The testimony of the faithful Stephen against Israel was this: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do alway resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did so do ye," Acts vii, 51. This was a solemn charge against the nation which they could not receive without resistance, and they stoned the faithful witness who so fearlessly testified of the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Holy Trinity. This is a solemn picture for our hearts to dwell upon! It is the Holy Ghost that is especially resisted now, by the unjudged flesh in every unregenerated heart, and alas! is often grieved in God's own children. Stephen had a glorious vision of the blessed Lord, "standing on the right hand of God," (v. 56) waiting in anxious expectation, as it were, to see how His faithful witness would be received and dealt with

by the nation. There is something peculiarly remarkable in this *standing* position of our Lord. It was evidently that of priestly intercession for His earthly people, over whom His heart still yearned with parental fondness, but after they had rejected Stephen's testimony in the power of the Holy Ghost "He sat down henceforth expecting, till His enemies became His footstool." Stephen's testimony, that he saw the rejected man Jesus at the right hand of God, that One whom they crucified as an imposter, that One of whom they had bribed the guard of the sepulchre, to say, "His disciples stole Him away while we slept," fired the anger of the Pharisaical Jews, "Then they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears; and ran upon Him with one accord, and cast Him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul," (vs. 57, 58.) How singularly God in His purpose connects Saul with the murder of Stephen. As one witness is cut down, another and more eminently used in the place of service and testimony is raised up to set forth the gospel of God's grace in the power of the Holy Ghost. Although Saul was at that time persecuting Christians, "hailing men and women and committing them to prison," God afterward arrested him while on his way to Damascus and struck him down to the earth. Saul feels power and owns Lordship by the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" The Lord replies, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest!" That One whom Saul had been taught by his Jewish education to treat as an impostor, he now finds to be the Lord with power. He acknowledges the Lordship of Jesus, by asking, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts ix, 3-6. He owns power and Lordship in the once rejected One, but now in ready obedience, so beautifully exhibited in the once persecutor but now convert Saul, we see a noble example for all who have felt and owned the Lordship of Jesus.

“What wilt Thou have me to do” should be the question from every one that hath received faith to trust the blood of Christ. We are under the power and lordship of Satan, (for power and lordship are identical) until we own Jesus as Lord and confess Him before men. After we cast off the lordship of Satan and own Christ we are no longer our own but are “bought with a price.” How needful to redeem the time, in the use of any little gift for service, which our risen Lord may have conferred upon us, as well as to encourage gift in our fellow Christians. What a sad thing to be hindering the use of gifts in others by fostering prejudices in our minds, thus obscuring our sight and appreciation of Christ in them. We may be standing in the way of God in our fellow Christians, and thus be practising infidelity or unfaithfulness by our coldness or evil speaking. Nearly all believers in Christ, have been taught more or less in the world’s school of estimate, before accepting Him as their Saviour, and it requires much self-judgment and teaching in God’s school to supplant their worldly judgment by His estimate of things. Three cardinal truths Christians need to keep in mind to keep them from slipping into a worldly estimate and spirit of unfaithfulness, viz:— 1st “there is no respect of persons with God;” 2nd “hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom promised to them that love Him?” (James ii, 5.) 3rd “that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God.” These three things are useful tests to try our state of soul, as to whether we are estimating from God’s standpoint or from that of the world. The lap of the world has ever been the snare of the church, and there is a constant tendency to lapse back into the track of worldly conformity by unwatchful Christians, and thus become the anti-type of the raven sent out by Noah from the ark. The dove could find no place on the waste of waters for the sole of her foot, and so returned

to the ark, but the raven found ample sustenance upon the floating carcasses of men and beasts, suitable food for its unclean nature, which a world under judgment furnished for its support. The dove typifies the faithful Christian who can only find consolation in Christ the true Ark, but the raven shows the man of the world and the worldly Christian, who are easily satisfied with the world and its carnality. May our poor weak hearts learn the lesson of contrast between the dove and raven. The Lord said to Ananias by the spirit, concerning the new convert Saul, "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel, for I will shew him what great things he must suffer for my Name's sake," Acts xi. 15, 16. This brief announcement of Saul's (or Paul's) mission is very comprehensive. He was to become the chief evangelist and minister to the Gentiles, to carry on the work of "taking out a people for the name of the Lord," to form the church of God. The church of God began at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost descended in a very peculiar manner and baptized all the believers at Jerusalem into one body, "for by one spirit we are all baptized into one body." The church or assembly of God could not have existed on earth as the body of Christ until He, as Head, went up to heaven, and the Holy Ghost came down, and this for two especial reasons; first, the members of Christ are gathered to His name, a fact which could not exist until He went away from them. Second, they are gathered by the power of the Holy Ghost, which could not take place until Christ went away and the Comforter was come, St. John xvi, 7. A peculiar condition characterizes the child of God now in contrast with the believers in Old Testament days. *Now* since Pentecost, the believer is a temple of the Holy Ghost, the third person of the Triune God, dwelling within him, 1 Cor. vi, 19. *Then* "holy men of God spake as *they*

were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Peter i, 21. There is no record of the Holy Ghost *dwelling in* the believer until the work commenced of manifesting the elect of God to form the church. The church is revealed in scripture under two aspects; first, as the body of Christ, Eph. i, 22, 23; and secondly, as "the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Tim. ii, 15. All true believers born again of the Word and of the Spirit, St. John iii, 5, (water there meaning the word of God) are members of the church which is the body of Christ, and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air when He comes to take up the church of God, 1 Thess. iv, 14-18. No matter what *name* they may bear on earth, if they are truly the Lord's, (and the Lord knoweth them that are His,) they belong to the church which is the body of Christ. We see now three distinct classes in the world, viz: "the Jew, the Gentile, and the church of God." The first epistle of Timothy presents the church in its original order in apostolic times; but the second epistle of Paul to Timothy forestalls the departure and apostacy of the outward organized forms of profession in these last days. The seven letters to the seven churches in Asia, seen in Rev. ii, iii, are evidently typical of the different periods of the church's history through which she has passed. Although written to local assemblies at the places named, there is in these addresses a broad spiritual scope opening out to the meditative heart, that reveals the purposes of God in the church in a most instructive and interesting sense, and engages one's spirit with heavenly themes and principles, to bring out the wondrous riches of God in Christ, and present what God has in store for the overcomer when the wearisome journey of this wilderness scene is passed. Christ is seen by St. John sitting among the candlesticks clothed in the habiliments of judgment, with feet of brass, denoting executive power. It is important to note this, as He

will judge His own in what is contrary to Himself, unless they judge themselves. "Holiness becometh thine house" is the word, and the Lord is jealous over His own with godly jealousy; and desirous of their growth in grace, that they may find in Him a satisfying portion for their occupation of heart, that they may be more conformed to His image, for whatever occupies the heart stamps its image upon it, and gives character to the one occupied. If a man is covetous, he soon presents a miserly character, if ambitious, he presents the character of a selfish tyrannical despot, so if he is taken up in heart with the things of God he manifests a Christian character. The first letter is written by the Lord, through John, to the church at

EPHESUS.

This marks out the first or palmy days of the church, so to speak. The Lord has nothing against Ephesus but that she has left her *first love*. Her first love was Christ Himself, as an object for occupation, and it very soon became apparent in the church that He had not the place in the affections of the saints that He ought to have. The saints at Ephesus had done much that the Lord commanded, had tried the false apostles and found them liars, had borne much for His sake, and even hated the works of the Nicolaitanes, which thing the Lord hates. Nicolaitanism is man conquering God's children evidently, and subjecting them to man's rule by making merchandise of them, instead of leaving them free to serve Christ. This conquering of the people had not corrupted the first days of the history of the church. But still He says they were *fallen*, and calls upon them to repent and do their first works or He would come upon them quickly and remove the candle stick out of his place. How quickly the candle stick was removed the subsequent history of the church too plainly shows. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the SPIRIT saith unto

the churches." Mark, it is the spirit speaking, telling out the mind of Christ toward His own pilgrim people. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Here is the beginning of a beautiful order of promises to the overcomer. The tree of life is the antidote for all the dire consequences of sin. To guard the way to it, cherubim were placed, and a flaming sword which turned everywhere to keep the way of the tree of life, (Gen. iii, 24,) lest man after he was turned out of Eden should return in his own strength and eat of the tree of life and live forever. He could only return through the promise of a Saviour, which must be received by faith, (not of works lest any man should boast,) and this Adam did receive, when God declared the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head, Gen. iii, 15. The overcomer in Christ will partake of the tree of life, because all that was against him, as a child of Adam, has been cancelled through the death and merits of Christ. We next take up the address to the church at

SMYRNA.

We will discover, as we proceed in our brief meditations over these addresses, despite the warnings and threatenings which the Lord sends to the church, that things grew worse and worse as each stage or period of the church's history was entered upon. No positive complaint is lodged against Smyrna, but "tribulation ten days," is promised as a result of what had already begun in the Ephesian period. Every student of church history knows that this ten days tribulation marks out the period of persecutian which came upon the church in the days of the heathen Emperors. This is one of the marked proofs that these addresses to the churches in Asia prefigure the history of the church down to the end. Other proofs will present themselves as we proceed. The Lord knows the works,

tribulation and poverty of Smyrna, (but still they are rich) and the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews (or worshippers) and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan. Here is the apostate party inside the church, referred to. The "mystery of iniquity" was already working, and the faithful in the Smyrnain period, amid their suffering and trials, were encouraged to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a "crown of life." What an incentive to faithfulness was here! Though they were persecuted to death, as to their bodies, yet as it was for the Lord's sake, they would have a crown of life. The tribulation and suffering they were enduring was to be the Lord's means of driving them nearer to Himself, that they might find in Him their sole comfort, and that in the face of the hypocrisy and pretension that was growing in their very midst. But the promise to the overcomer is characteristic! "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." They were enduring the first death, that of their bodies, but they were not to fear the second death. That was to come upon those who were unfaithful, and who escaped the persecution by fellowship with evil and joining issue with the persecutors. The Lord had said with reference to the sufferings of the Jewish remnant yet to come, "he that saveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my name sake, shall find it," (or words to this effect,) and this principle was being forestalled in events in the Smyrnan history of the church. This lesson is not without importance to the child of God now. That which he has been educated in of the world, and what he loves by nature, must be reckoned dead, that the new life he has in Christ may grow and unfold its power upon his walk and conversation, that he may bring forth fruit unto God. His early education may have been that which looked forward to greatness as a man of the world, either in political, military, or literary pursuits, where personal notoriety

or distinction after the manner of man, was aimed at. As with Paul, this is all to be counted but "dung" for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." Whenever we would recognize the claims of Christ upon us nature must give place and self be denied. There can be no real permanent growth in Christ unless nature's hopes and aims are set aside. So in the days of the persecution Christians closed their eyes to their own comfort and convenience and suffered because of their faithfulness. But Satan found that this only was spreading the gospel of Christ, instead of destroying the testimony for Christ, and he brings in a different class of tactics which we will briefly consider in the address to

PERGAMOS.

The first charge brought against Pergamos is, "*thou dwellest* even where Satan's seat (or throne) is." The pilgrim character was given up, and the church in the Pergamos period had begun to dwell, or rest, in a scene where Satan rules as king or as prince of this world. Here was ground for a solemn charge of unfaithfulness or infidelity. It was the result of Satan playing upon the credulity of unwatchful Christians. Constantine, a Roman Emperor, made a great profession of Christianity, pretending to have seen a cross displayed in the sky, and gave his pretensions such pompous publicity that he succeeded in captivating and deluding Christians far and near. He became the patron of Christianity after a carnal manner, by putting Christians into places of note and power in the Roman Government, thus bringing in the Balaam doctrine, or union of the church and the world, a thing highly displeasing to God. The church ought to be a correct representation of God on earth, while the world is directly opposed to God. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the

lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but of the world," 1 John ii, 15, 16. Here is a positive proof of the direct antagonism of the world and God, and when the church became united to the world apostasy was the sure result. This "dwelling" of the church in Pergamos was attended by the persecution unto death of many like Antipas, who were a testimony against the cold worldly condition into which the church had fallen. The doctrine of Balaam, which means "destroying the people," breaks down the barriers of separation between the church and the world, thus destroying the testimony which marks out Christians as a distinct people for God, and merges all into one leavened mass by the spirit of the world, under satanic rule. Balaam coveted the presents of Balak, the king of Moab, but as God forbade him to curse Israel, Balaam teaches Balak to cast a stumbling block before them, by parading the young Moabitish woman before the camp of Israel and thus drew out their young men in marriage and fornication. This plan succeeded, much to Israel's hurt, but it presents but a faint outline in type of the injury which has resulted from the union of the church and the world since. The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was held by many in Pergamos, a ripened-up result of what had begun in Ephesus. The Ephesians hated the *works* of the Nicolaitanes, but in Pergamos the *doctrine* was held, presenting a confirmed degeneracy into that which God hated. The pilgrim character of the church had been given up for a dwelling place in the world where Satan's throne is. The Nicolaitanian principle soon opened the way for a more full display of man's corrupt condition by nature in the rise of apostasy. Clerical dogmas, and the ingenious inventions of man's busy nature, under the power and instigation of Satan, soon brought forth a host of fallacious doctrines, base counterfeits of the things which become sound doctrine, which Timothy was exhorted

to speak, and when a pure gospel was preached as a testimony for Christ, those who preached it were driven to the fastnesses of nature, and forced to many privations and persecutions unto death for their love of the truth as it is in Christ.

There was a patient, faithful remnant in Pergamos, who held fast the name of Christ, and did not deny their faith amid all the persecution through which they passed *where Satan dwelleth*. Their individual testimony was often sealed by their own blood, and the peculiar trials of each were known and owned of the Lord according to their individual faithfulness to Himself. The promise to the overcomer in Pergamos reveals this peculiar fellowship with the Lord in the trials and sufferings of the faithful of that time.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." Rev. ii, 17. *Manna* was wilderness food to the children of Israel, and only ceased after the trials of the wilderness were over. Christ the true Manna, is what the faithful, tried soul feeds upon during his trials in this scene. The *hidden manna*, is Christ in the glory, the One whom the Christian can "*consider* lest he grow weary and faint in his mind." The white stone was a mark of esteem or appreciation of the giver, which he held of the one to whom it was presented. The Lord knows and values every exhibition of faithfulness to Himself, by any of His members here in this scene. He treasures up all their difficulties and trials, and when He comes to take them up to the judgment seat He will regard each in the peculiar way suited to his individual case, and reward each one as He esteems him. He knows, as no one else knows but the one He rewards, what that one has passed through for Himself. Every individual case is different from the rest, and the name which the stone contains as a figure of the Lord's es-

teem, will be suited to the peculiar trials through which that one had passed, and known only to himself and the Lord. How blessed to each individual believer in all time, who has overcome in the name of Christ, to hear the Lord greeting him or her, in the Father's house, with that peculiar name which He gives in accordance with His estimation of them. Every temptation or trial, He has sustained us through, every time we have looked up to Him to guide and direct our pathway, every conquest we have gained over self and the flesh within, or the world and Satan without, is treasured by Himself, and stands as a component of the esteem He has formed of us and the *new name* He will give us. Poor tried suffering pilgrim down here in this howling wilderness, look up to Christ! He knows all about you and your difficulties, and can and will help you through them all. Trust Him though you cannot trace the way He may lead your feet, He will give rest to your soul, if you take His yoke upon you and learn of Him, "for His yoke is easy and His burden is light." Let us now take up the message to

THYATIRA.

We have seen in Pergamos, the basis of apostasy laid, and the church *dwelling* in a sin-cursed scene where Satan's throne is. In Thyatira, the apostasy assumed *form, activity, and dominion*, and with its multifarious errors and heresies, came forth to carry out Satan's counterfeit of the true church on earth, and present something to the eye of man in the flesh, that has the appearance of sanctity, but denies the power and life of true godliness. The faithful in Thyatira, are commended for their works, love, service, faith and patience. This was the individual testimony, while the corporate condition of the church at the time, was corrupted by the teachings of the woman Jezebel. "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel *which calleth herself a*

prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols," (v. 20.) The woman Jezebel is the opposite to the man Christ Jesus. The teachings of the truth as it is in Christ, leads to the worship of God in spirit and in truth. The teachings of Jezebel, or the apostasy, leads to the worship of idols and to a walk by sight, just the opposite of the walk by faith of the Christian. Her claim to teach is absolute and tyrannical. "Hear the church," is her demand without reserve or without toleration where she can enforce it, and where ever she gains a footing, corruption springs up as a matter of course. A religion of the flesh which the natural unregenerate man can conform readily to, and grow proud and consequential in, is the secret of her success in teaching and leading souls astray. Baptismal regeneration and apostolic succession, are the two main heretical motors, by which apostasy is propagated by the woman Jezebel. They are legitimate out-croppings of a spirit of opposition to Christ, and aim to set aside the needed work of God through the power of the Holy Ghost. Baptismal regeneration in principle, denies that portion of God's Word which declares "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

It also denies that the sinner must be born again of the Word and the Holy Spirit. But it serves as a principle in a false theology whose supporters declare is the only true church on earth, in a tone and spirit which God's Word condemns, quite in opposition to the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus who came as the "man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs." *Apostolic succession*, another fruit of the teachings of the woman Jezebel, is a presumptuous claim of man which turns God out of the question as to His right to choose and raise up instruments to set forth and minister the grace of Christ. It puts into the hands of man what

God has positively reserved for Himself, the right to minister through the power of the Holy Ghost in the choice of His own people to constitute His church. Apostasy claims the right to minister through a priesthood that has its origin in the material qualifications of human education instead of the new birth, and qualifications by the Holy Ghost as members of the mystical body of Christ. This is the Jezebel character which overcame by Satanic craft the saints in Thyatira and which exists now, bolstered up by worldliness and priestcraft, having deception as its handmaid, to carry out its falsities and absurdities. It accommodates a religion to suit the flesh in man, and as a necessity, must be opposed to God. Ever jealous and suspicious, because dark in character and origin itself, it is nontolerant and hateful toward those who are earnest and zealous in telling out God's good news to a world lying in sin and wickedness. What it cannot accomplish by persecution and cruelty, it seeks by flattery and cunning craft to pollute and corrupt, thus gaining an end to suit its assumed right to rule and govern in the nations of the earth. "Semper eadem" (always the same,) is the motto of apostasy, and its character has been well borne out in all times since it first took form and assumed power, and its principal aim is to acquire the temporal authority of government in the different nations where it gains a footing, and then to abuse that power in the persecution of Christianity. It uses so much varied policy and lays so many plans to carry out its ends, that it requires constant watchfulness to keep clear of its fascinating, polluting power. Rome's end is to be "cast into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." God has pronounced His sentence upon her, and will surely perform what He declares in His word. Unto the faithful in Thyatira He will meet out a reward suited to the testimony they have borne for Himself,

and bid them rejoice in the favor into which He will bring them, in proportion to the sufferings they have endured for His name's sake. Mark the promise to the overcomer in Thyatira! "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father, *and I will give him the morning star!*" chap. ii, 25-8. What blessed association in His executive judgment is here promised to the overcomer! Three important things are here promised, viz: 1st, power over the nations, just what seducing Rome aims to acquire, but which Christ Himself will have, and those that are His, with Him, "for the Lord knoweth them that are his." 2nd, he shall rule them with a rod of iron, which implies governing with Christ through the millennium reign. 3rd, "I will give him the morning star," here is Christ Himself promised, as He is the bright and morning star, Rev. xxii, 16. The order of promise and warning is reversed in this message to Thyatira, evidently because the remnant after this is addressed instead of the whole corporate thing, as corporate testimony had become so corrupted that the individual is only regarded as having the hearing ear. What a rich encouragement to faithfulness, even in the face of individual failure is here presented, and to "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and completer of our faith, who for the joy that was *set before Him* endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty in the Heavens." Let us now briefly glance at the message to

SARDIS.

Sardis evidently shows the Reformation (as it is known in history), a coming out of the church of Rome as

a testimony, under the power of certain truths, against her errors and false position as assuming the right to teach and mislead the saints of God. It must be clearly understood here that this testimony of Sardis (or the Reformation) is the light of God's Word making manifest the errors in the church which were the result of the teaching and seductions of the woman Jezebel. When justification by faith was brought out as a cardinal truth of God's Word, the light revealed and condemned the craft and falsities of the apostasy, "for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." The contrast between God's Word and the errors then prevailing was so great as to cause the persecution of the faithful ones who set forth the truth by the blind devotees of apostasy. As the blessed Lord Himself was a standing rebuke to the false teachings of the Pharisees, Saducees and Herodians, so were the faithful witnesses for Christ through the "dark ages" and in the Reformation, a constant rebuke to error and priestcraft. The "leaven" of the Pharisees was made up of superstition and traditional teachings, the same that the apostasy now sets forth; that of the Saducees was rationalistic infidelity, seen in the modern infidel schools, while the leaven of Herod was seeking favor with a world which is "not of the Father," 1 John ii, 15-17. This three-fold leaven of iniquity was what the Lord warned His disciples against (Mat. xvi, 12), and which we are to be putting forth efforts to resist if we would stand as a testimony for Himself. But how has the work of testimony stood since the Reformation commenced? The followers of Luther as an organized system have drifted back into the old Jezebel school, both as to doctrine and practice. We find the English church holding the same exclusive right to teach as *the church*, as Rome claims, based too upon the principle of apostolic succession, with baptismal regeneration as a shibboleth to acquire members. Infallibility is not held outwardly as a doctrine but it is

implied in spirit in the general tenor of the church's teachings as a system of man. God's word is not taken as a ground of discipline to deal with sin and error, for if it were, the very deception of the false teaching set forth would be unmasked to the light and the whole system would fall under the exposure. Every compromise with the world, the flesh and Satan, fears the light of the word, because the word is a simple testimony against the works of darkness. There were a *few* names in Sardis who will walk with the Lord in white, who had not defiled their garments, names of those who were really the Lord's amid all the profession in which they moved, and who, according to the light they had, were faithful in their day and generation. It is refreshing to the spirit to look back at the lives of many of the Reformers, how they bore with meekness and patience the bitter persecutions that were heaped upon them by the Romish church, as well as by the English church in latter times. Their lives given up for the truth's sake and their character defamed for the name of Christ, cast a halo upon the history of God's work that nerves in its contemplation the feeble heart now to press onward in the face of all difficulties. The "few names" who were faithful and "had not defiled their garments" with the corruptions which the woman Jezebel taught are precious in the Lord's sight and come down to us in history as the seed of the church. They were instrumental in God's hand of keeping alive the testimony for Himself, and representing the church as "the pillar and ground of the truth," in the face of the huge systems of apostasy which have endeavored to check and put down true spiritual testimony. All in Sardis who defiled their garments by listening to Jezebel's falsities have no promise from the Lord, except to be cast into a bed with her, (as we saw in Thyatira), but the promise to the overcomer in Sardis is, "the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his

name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels," (chap. iii, 5.) What a three-fold preciousness this promise has in the face of all the difficulties through which many of the Reformers passed. How it must have cheered their hearts while suffering^g cruel deaths at the hands of wicked men. The white raiment, the unblotted name, and the name confessed before the Father and His angels, formed a triune support under all difficulties. May our hearts enter into it and take courage from their faithful example. Now that the light from the word is coming out with greater brilliancy under the teachings of the Holy Ghost, may we value none the less that which the "few names in Sardis" suffered to maintain, and which forms as it were the ground-work of what we now so happily and unhinderedly enjoy. If they were often forced to hide themselves in the fastnesses of nature to read the Word and worship God as assembled saints, may we truly value our privileges as we have them, and praise the Father for His loving kindness and care manifested toward us daily, as His believing children. Dear Christian reader, suffer the word of exhortation to prize the reading of the blessed Word, and your privilege to use it as a "lamp to your feet and a light to your path." Turn not from it to pursue the light unstable productions of imaginative minds, that would fill your thoughts with unmeaning vagaries, and lead your feet into the paths of error and infidelity. Self-denial is often necessary to resist the appeal to nature within us, made by some fascinating production of man, but every victory we gain through Christ over nature and its inclinations but fortifies the heart to fight the good fight of faith more successfully. "Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain" is the exhortation to the remnant in Sardis. Do we not need the same word now? Verily we do, and may the Lord help us to apply it in these days of departure and apostasy.

PHILADELPHIA.

We have in the message to Philadelphia a word to those who in these days gather to the name of Christ *alone*, and those who hold fast His name as the true and only source of power and success in working for the Lord. The value of that NAME in supplication and service cannot be over estimated or prized as it ought. The blessed Lord alludes to its value to the disciples, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, ask and receive that your *joy may be full*." "If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it." "Where two or three are gathered *in my name*, there am I in the midst." "But these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in His name," St. John xx, 31. An open door is set before the remnant in Philadelphia which no one can shut, (v. 8.) and why? "Because thou hast a little power, and hath kept my word, and *hast not denied my name*." How the blessed Lord values those who own His name. Confession of who the Lord was by Peter, brought out the rock upon which the church was to be built. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Confession of the name of Jesus as Lord finishes the work of salvation in the believing soul, and adds such to the church, and so the work of building goes on, as the lordship of Satan is denied through the power of Jesus' name.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall,"

and let sinners saved by grace, who know and sing in the church, as led by their Head, a higher strain than angels can sing, "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" at the value of that name for them. Mark the place of dignity the faithful in Philadelphia are brought into! "Behold I make them of (or cause them to be known as) the synagogue of Satan, who say

they are Jews (meaning worshippers) and are not, but do lie ; behold I will cause them to come and worship at thy feet, and know that I have loved thee." (v. 9.)

On the day of the judgment of the wicked dead, (Rev. xx, 11-15) when the great White Throne is occupied by Christ and His church, when every knee shall have bowed to the name of Jesus, it is *then* that the faithful Philadelphian is fully known as loved by his Lord. Then the love borne to him now is manifested and shines in its greatest brilliancy, because contrasted to the judgment which must punish the wicked whose names are not found in the book of life. How precious the love that can save from such a doom. How rich the favor and blessing that can exalt to such dignity, those who, but for it, would meet the never ending punishments of the lake of fire, the death that never dies, the second death. "Blessed and holy is he (the true Christian) that hath part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with Him a thousand years." And I saw thrones and they sat upon them (the church, or believers in this dispensation), and judgment was given unto them, (chap. xx, 4, 5.) Paul writing to the saints at Corinth asks, "do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? (Here the wicked angels who kept not their first estate, are referred to, 1 Cor. vi, 2-3.) So we find quite enough scripture proof that Christians instead of meeting judgment in Heaven, are put upon the judgment seat with Christ, to come forth and judge the world. True they stand before the judgment seat of Christ as soon as they are caught up to be with the Lord. But what for? Evidently for reward as a return for labor. (1 Cor. iii, 8.) Judgment being God's "strange work," in contrast with His love (which is His nature), for God *is Love*,

who could judgment be for but for the wicked and disobedient? Surely not for those who belong to the family of God, and who are caught up out of a world in which only they could be tempted to disobey the Father, and require chastening. Hence it is only in the church's course on earth that Christ sits among the candlesticks with feet of brass, which means correction and chastening. Another rich promise comes out to the Christian in Philadelphia. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth," (v. 10.) The "hour of temptation" here referred to comes upon apostate Christendom and Israel, after the church is caught up to Heaven, and while the seal and trumpet judgments are being poured out upon the earth, during the last week of Jewish time spoken of in Daniel's prophecy. If we turn to 2 Thess. ii, 7-12, we find the man of sin spoken of, and what takes place *before* he is revealed. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth *will let* (or hinder according to the old English version,) until he be taken out of the way." Who is this "he" here referred to? Evidently the Holy Ghost, as dwelling in the church collectively, and in the body of the individual believer, which now *lets* or hinders the full manifestation of the Anti-Christ, or man of sin, as he will be known after the church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, according to 1 Thess. iv, 14-18. The taking up of the church and the "taking out of the way" of this "he" or the Holy Ghost, is one event; and then we have the deception, or hour of temptation referred to in the message to Philadelphia as above quoted. "And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming," (v. 8.) It is clear from this and other scriptures that the coming of the Lord for

His Saints (believers *now*), and His appearing with them to judge this wicked man and his confederate the false prophet, are two separate events, with time intervening. We will dwell a little upon this that there may be no confusion in the mind of the reader. First the Lord comes for His church, (1 Thess. iv, 14-18) Secondly, during the seven years which make up the last week of Daniel's prophecy, the church is in heaven through the opening of the seals, the sounding of the trumpets and the pouring out of the vials, from the 5th to the 18th chapters of the book of Revelation. Thirdly, the Lord comes with the church as the Rider on the white horse followed by the armies of heaven, as seen in the 19th chapter, vs. 11-17, when the beast and false prophet are taken and cast *alive* into the lake of fire, (v. 20.) We would here remark that the book of Revelation is divided into three distinct dispensations of judgment. The 2nd and 3rd chapters, as before remarked, show the chastening of the church in her pilgrimage. From the 4th chapter to the 20th, the judgment of the wicked quick or *living*, is presented. From the beginning of the 20th chapter to the close of the book, the judgment of the wicked dead is brought out and the bringing in of the eternal state is presented. How wonderful the ways of God are, as working through the power He has conferred upon His beloved Son. The study of prophecy, if pursued with reference to Christ as the One through whom it is all fulfilled, not only begets intelligence in the soul, but enlarges the heart toward God and calls out praise and thanksgiving at the wondrous ways He manifests Himself to man. It is only by the power of the Holy Ghost working within and taking of the things of God and showing them to us, that we can get both a comforting and intelligent knowledge of His ways in grace as well as in judgment. A mere head knowledge to the undelivered heart serves either to arouse to a sense of condemnation by nature and a need of a Saviour,

or sets the mind to speculating over that which it neither enjoys or profits by, out of the presence of Christ. The promise to the overcomer in Philadelphia is indeed precious. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of the city of my God which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name, (v. 12.) Three things come prominently out in this promise, and they are each a result of the travail of soul which the blessed Lord Jesus endured on Calvary. First, the overcomer is made "a *pillar* in the temple of *my* God." Mark, the Lord specifies *whose* God He is referring to. There are "gods many" in man's estimate, as whatever claims the homage of the heart is a god to it. A pillar signifies support, and the Christian is to stand as a support in the manifestation of the church, even as he now serves as a testimony for Christ in a scene that rejected Him. Secondly, "I will write upon him the name of the city of *my* God." The church as a whole is symbolized by a city. The "new Jerusalem" of Rev. 21st is the church represented in beauty and proportions by a well arranged city. The ruling efficiency of the church with Christ is best set forth by the proportions and arrangements of a city. Lastly, "I will write upon him *my new name*." The new best name of love will be written upon, in short will characterize the Christian in all his capacity and relationships in heaven. As God is love, and love is of God, so will the child of God be transformed and made like Christ, and as Christ is of the Father so will all be love who are brought into the transforming power of His presence. How precious is the theme my soul; for thy meditation and profit. "Hold fast that thou hast that no man take thy crown," is the parting word of exhortation to the Philadelphian, (v. 11.) The Lord is coming and "quickly!" is the word. Dear

Christian, in this day when everything of man around you would lure you out into the enjoyment of the present scene which is hastening on to certain judgment, and get you occupied with the vain deceitful offerings of the god of this world, be watchful and have your armor on, as a servant that waits for his lord, and ready at the sound of the trumpet and voice of the archangel that wakes the sleeping saints and changes the living ones as they rise into the air to meet their Lord. To the one that is getting his richest portion in the things of this world this exhortation will be anything but palatable. But the earnest, toil-worn saint of God will understand its import and rejoice in the thought of meeting his Lord, which event will put an end to all his trials and difficulties in this wilderness world.

LAODICEA.

This stage of the church's history is the lull of lukewarm religiousness that immediately precedes the coming of the Lord for the church, and upon which He pronounces the sentence of rejection. The first word to Laodicea is, "these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." Here is the authority set forth that is about to pronounce a solemn sentence upon the existing state of things. When authority is thus prominently mentioned, something deeply important is sure to follow. Mark the sentence here pronounced! "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert either cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm I will *spue thee out of my mouth*." What a sweeping word of condemnation is this. There is nothing so hateful to God as inert lukewarmness. "I would thou wert cold or hot." Open opposition is preferable to that insipid assenting to truth, when the heart gives the lie to what the lips utter. Just before the Lord comes for the church, profuse profession is the principal characteristic of Christendom. Organi-

zations upon the basis of expediency and man's estimate abound on every hand, and with their multifarious efforts to aggrandizement grasp at and swallow up the enquiring minds of the youth as they come upon the stage of action, and are transformed, not into the image of Christ by occupation with Himself, but into the character of the organization by which they are overcome and schooled into. And this vast mass of worldly conformed intelligences are energized, not by the Holy Ghost, but by the "spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience." It has a form of godliness, a seemingness of sanctity, but being without the Holy Ghost, it stands as a positive denial of the power of godliness, from which the faithful child of God is told to "turn away." Boasting in its knowledge and worldly accumulations, it says, "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." But God's answer is, "thou art wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked," (v. 17.) And in this poor self-complacent condition, what is God's counsel, "that thou buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye salve that thou mayest see." There is poverty, nakedness and blindness, in luke-warm profession and no reality in God's sight. The gold tried in the fire is that which God gives in Christ, and which comes forth brighter as it passes through the testing fire of persecution and satanic opposition. God will not allow us to take the path with Himself without testing us in it, and what is of Himself in us will only shine out brighter as the dross of nature in us is purged out by trials and persecutions. White raiment is the clothing of the Saints, and is that which is of Christ in us which God looks at instead of our poor naked Adam nature. And the eye salve anointing is the Holy Ghost which gives the intelligence of the mind of Christ that we may have

that spiritual discernment of the things of God which we need as children of light. And to the remnant in Laodicea He adds, "as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." And to the individual believer standing amid the vast bulk of worldliness and profession around him, the blessed Lord says, and how precious is the invitation, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man *hear my voice* and open the door I will come in to him, and sup with him and he with me," (v. 20.) Here is individual communion proffered by the Lord to the waiting faithful saint, though he stand alone amid all the Laodicean lukewarmness which characterizes the last days of the church on earth. And then the promise to the overcomer is full of richness and blessedness. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne." This is like Christ, reserving the richest and best promise to the last, in proportion to the difficulty of the path the overcomer has to walk in. And now dear reader, let us be candid and impartial in our glance at the condition of things in which we are now moving. Do we not see much of this Loadicean spirit of lukewarmness everywhere prevalent? Is not policy and profession the order of the day? If a cautious cunning worldly man has any business project to carry out he yokes in with some of the organized religious systems of the day, for the sake of patronage and prosperity. How empty and unmeaning appear the miserable subterfuges of the human heart when exposed to the testing light of God's presence. Everything seems to be done *manward* with a view to pass in the eyes of a world that turned out Christ, man forgetting that God, who tries the reins and hearts of all, knows all about it and will surely reward "every man according to his own labor." What does this lifting the vail of profession do for the faithful heart? Does he, can he hope by

remaining identified with it, to be able to "leaven it," as some say, and make it better? Ah no! it will leaven him instead and drag him down into worldly conformity, and thus corrupt and obliterate whatever testimony he may be bearing for Christ. The word is respecting the "great house" of Christendom with its vessels of honor and dishonor, (true Christians and professors mingled,) "If a man purge himself from these he shall be a vessel of honor fitted for the masters use," (2 Tim. ii, 20, 21.) "If thou shalt go forth and separate the precious from the vile thou shalt be as my mouth." Here is God's ground for true service, separation to Himself. It is in His presence, in quiet communion with Himself, that the real source of strength for service is found. Service to be *real* must have God's blessing attending it, if not it becomes a mere tinkling sound. There is no substantial results if His blessing is wanting, and how can we expect it while we are yoked in with unbelievers and worldlings in organized systems of man's devising? Much that appears fine and promising in the eyes of man will go for naught in God's estimate. The faithful uncompromising soul may be denounced as exclusive, narrow minded and the like, because he refuses to call good evil, and evil good, but he can well afford to be reviled while he has God for him, and "if God be for us, who can be against us." Let us not forget this invitation for communion and blessing amid the lukewarmness around, which the Lord presents to us so graciously and condescendingly. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." While we are busily engaged with our own things, and are, it may be, trying to find a portion in this scene to satisfy, He is knocking at the door of our hearts, desiring to commune with and bless us. How we ought to value it, yet how careless we are about it. "If any man hear my voice." Why do we not hear His voice more readily and more yieldingly than we do? The answer is here, "all men

seek *their own* and not the things that are Jesus Christ's." Our poor selfish hearts are not delivered as they ought to be, that we may serve Him as we ought. If we were more in meditation and prayer over the Word, and considering the value of the cross to God, and what Christ accomplished for Him as well as for us, we would not only walk along more in company and communion with Him, but live above the power of circumstances which serves to depress and hinder our growth up into Christ in all things. "And open the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me." The blessed Lord has not only wrought out all that is needful for our salvation, but all the necessary comfort for us on the journey in this wilderness through which we are passing. Rebecca was not only adorned with jewels and bracelets, as evidences of Isaac's inheritance which she had been chosen to share, but she was borne on the camel *led by the faithful Eliezar!* How rich and encouraging this is to our hearts! We are not only adorned with gifts and graces in our souls given us by the Lord through the power of the Holy Ghost, but we are led on by that same Spirit toward Christ our true Isaac, to enjoy the rich blessing of an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us." The indwelling of the blessed Spirit, as "earnest of the inheritance," not only comforts and teaches us, but engages our hearts with Christ, and prompts us to open the door of our hearts, that He may come in and sup with us and we with Him. And now as we close up this reference to the messages to the seven churches in Asia as types of the church's history, may you and I, dear Christian reader, not forget our individual portion of the blessing which the Lord holds out so freely to us. Let us realize that we have a rich income to live up to! Men often live not only up to their earthly incomes, but beyond them, and yet how few of God's children live near up to the spiritual

income God has provided for them in Christ. The world steals away so much of their time and attention that they go on barren hearted and unfaithful in the things of God, when they ought to be rejoicing in the joy, peace and consolation in the Holy Ghost which God has provided for them. Are we looking for riches? let us find our richest portion in Christ. Do we desire honor? The Lord hath said, "he that honoreth me, him will my Father honor." Does the vain glory of this world attract us, the glory is before us that never grows dim. We are called "not to interpret providences, but to trust promises." May we enter into it! And to you dear unconverted reader, we would ask, would you have such a Christ and such a God and Father as the Christian has? If so accept Him! God says in substance to you in his word, "sinner I am well pleased with my Son, are you well pleased? if so we are reconciled." There is the gospel for you in brief. Oh how simple and gracious the offering, to the heart that will simply and confidently accept it! We leave it with you with the warning, Christ is coming! Be ye also ready. Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

Results of infidelity and departure from God in modern times—Historical proofs that man, without God, ends in total ruin—Reflections.

When we look through the pages of what is known as "profane history" and trace out the causes of what has produced certain effects in the history of nations, we easily see that two great currents of character follow through and control the events which transpire, viz: good and evil. Whenever God's honor has been regarded, and His Word in any degree been heeded in shaping and controlling the affairs of any nation, He has honored that nation with certain degrees of prosperity and usefulness. This is very apparent

and reasonable too, for human governments are ordained to preserve order and serve as protection to the work of "taking out a people for the name of the Lord," and this is best done when principles of truth have been maintained, and have entered into the counsels and actions of those who gave direction to the current of passing events. If we review the history of different nations in modern times, we find this thought borne out in a very marked way. Since the reformation set in with a full tide there have been alternately, the rule of apostasy, and that of a free toleration of conscientious worship of God, and it is easy to mark the ebb and flow of prosperity and character of government when the dark rule of Romish non-toleration prevailed, or that of the encouragement of the circulation of God's Word. Take the history of England for instance ! as soon as the nation woke up out of the long lethargic sleep of Papal rule, under the awakening peals of the soul-stirring truths of the Reformation, she became a nation not only of spiritual exponents of God's truth to a great degree, but of moral poets, pure literary writers, and of statesmen of high and pure motives of human government. Under the reign of Henry VIII the truth attained a footing, so that in that of Queen Elizabeth it broke forth with power, and the history of her reign presents many names of men, and women too, who were eminently used of the Lord in the diffusion of the truth, and the promotion of salutary reforms, as fruits of God being honored in the land. We speak now from the records of tangible results which were fruits of the truth breaking in and ramifying through the avenues of all classes of society, from the lordly peer of the realm to the humble peasant, that all might feel its soul-reviving and heart-nourishing power. God will honor those who honor His Son, His Word has spoken it, and the history of nations proves it as well as the lives of individuals. If we consider for a moment the history

of those countries where priestcraft and superstition have long held sway, what does it present? A record of darkness, human suffering and God-dishonoring dealing on every hand! Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Austria, Turkey, Russia, the greater part of Asia, Africa, the South-American States and Mexico, as well as a part of the United States and Canada show to the enquiring mind how wretched and miserable sin can make a people and keep them in the bondage of nature's darkness, constantly bringing forth corruption and iniquity, and proving the solemn fact that man is "prone to do evil as the sparks fly upward." The influences which prevailed that brought about the French revolution and elevated Napoleon Bonaparte into power were generated by lasciviousness, profligacy and the propagation of infidel principles. The reign of the Bourbon dynasty had encouraged all that in which the flesh in man delights, had opposed the propagation of Scriptural and even moral principles, and the writings of opposers of God's Word had brought forth a generation of desperate, unprincipled men who were ready to spring into the arena of mortal strife and display that ferociousness of character which the opposition to truth is sure to create in the human mind. The Jacobin clubs that inaugurated the reign of terror under the bloody triumvirate of Danton Marat and Robespierre, were the legitimate offspring of the nature of man, energized by evil teaching, and unrestrained by the wholesome propagation of truth and its power over the heart. "Their feet are swift to shed blood," is their record, and presents a solemn proof that naturally, there is "no fear of God before their eyes." This innate principle of moral depravity, if unchecked by the power of truth prevailing in some form, is easily brought into action by the misrule of that which is opposed to the truth. Prove it in the child as it were from his mother's knee, mischief is his native element

if unhindered, and as soon as he roams the street he drinks up profanity and obscenity as readily as a sponge takes up water. Follow him through life and if home influences have been corrupt, and nature has had its own way, sin and crime have certainly resulted as the fruit of his life. The principle holds good as to nations, and as nations are made up of social elements, and these again are toned and energized by the power of individual minds, how important that the truth have free course, that each individual may become an epistle "known and read of all men" of its beneficial power upon mankind. Principles of morality, apart from revelation, or aside from the soul-awakening truths of God's Word, which pronounce man in nature as "unprofitable," will not preserve from moral ruin, or present a faultless record for the benefit of posterity. Sooner or later they will end in the dire results of human ambition, in the poison of intellectual pride, and the sad and sorrowful finale of dishonor to God, as well as the rejection of His Son as the only One *in whom*, as a new creation, man can only bring forth fruit acceptable to God, and that will stand that fire which will try every man's work of what sort it is. No matter how apparently beautiful any system of morality may be that works up its capital out of the unregenerate heart, "FAILURE" is sure to stand inscribed upon its tombstone. Look carefully through the moral philosophy of the ancients, what is there in all its reasoning and tomes of lore that can give rest to the aching heart, or satisfy the yearnings of an immortal soul? Verily nothing. Occupation of mind they do present, but such food as the barren husks of the "far country" offered to the poor prodigal, before he said "I will arise and go to my father."

Egypt, Greece, Rome, and some modern nations that have risen into human consequence by their excellence in that which nature in man values, where are they and what does their record present to-day?

Strife, bloodshed and human degradation are all that we have as tangible results of their existence. How solemn is the record to the meditative soul! How convincing to the spirit-enlightened heart that "all flesh is as grass and all the glory of man is as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever," 1 Peter 1, 24. What is the solemn lesson our hearts learn under these searching meditations? We learn that human knowledge "puffeth up, but charity (or love) edifieth." The fruit of that "faith which worketh by love" is what stands the test of all that through which it is called to pass and gives the soul confidence in the face of the most subtle opposition. That which God "works within to will and do of His own good pleasure" we are encouraged to "work out," or show forth, as the fruit of the new life we have received by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. In this brief historical review we might enlarge more minutely on the lives and conduct of individuals, but the history of results in actions and deeds is easily recorded. Any casual observer can note and review effects, but we are privileged to scan principles and investigate causes as the Spirit of God gives discernment and knowledge. But He will not, can not, teach by His Spirit, the uplifted heart, puffed up by a sense of human consequence. If we give place to a judgment according to appearance, or have respect to persons according to their social position or human learning, we are not going along the way in company with God in our estimate, for He plainly declares that He has no respect to persons in *His* estimate.

Reality is what God desires in His children and He will produce it though it be at the expense of chastening and righteous dealing in judgment. And now may we enquire what is the condition of the world around us at this present moment? Candid

reader let us pause and consider before we answer this solemn momentous question. Is the moral status of the world at large really better in condition before God, or nearer "perfection" as some hold, than it was a century ago? Looking on the favorable side of this question for the world, we see human learning making wonderful developments and reaching what seems to be much to be desired results. Facilities for transportation of people and material, and for the transmission of intelligence over the *civilized* portion of the world, were never so great as at present. People converse with each other from continent to continent, and any important event is known in a few minutes over half the globe. Surprising this is indeed. All branches of industry have attained great degrees of proficiency, and scientific knowledge has reached such an acme of perfection that there would seem to be no further bounds to arrive at. Education in all its various developments has become so varied and intricate that a lifetime is spent in endeavors to master its offered treasures, then to sit down in wonder at what is yet to be possessed. All this seems to be very fascinating and much to be desired. But alas! Is the *character* changed for the better as we regard it in the light of God's presence? Alas no! In the face of all this fine progressive picture stands the sweeping, stunning sentence, **PASSING AWAY!** Man is yet man, and there is "nothing new under the sun." Nature revolves on her axis as it were, and produces a round of results and brings forth a succession of kindred fruits, but she never gets above the sun. The builders of Babel were no nearer heaven on the top of their huge tower than they were when they laid its foundation stones, but they were nearer their confusion and dispersion, and so is the world nearer judgment now than a hundred years ago. Man, with all his boasted standard of perfection will only aggravate his punishment in proportion to the blaze of God's truth

that shines upon him, if he reject its offered rays and its simple announcement of a much-needed Saviour in the person of God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Societies may organize to bolster up man in nature and propagate infidel principles, but they only manifest the confusion of Babel more fully. Everything that has not God's Spirit permeating and controlling its action partakes of the character of Babel, because it is of man in nature and presents the instability and confusion incident to nature. The human mind itself runs riot in excess if it has not leading principle to bring it out and give it direction. When thus acted upon it becomes subservient to the kind or character of the influences which act upon it. We may educate the flesh into any degree of accomplishment as men say, it is but the flesh still, and the greater degree it attains as to fancied excellence the further it is from God because the greater amount of pride must be overcome to learn its own nothingness, that God may come in and act. Humiliating it is indeed to throw out of account all that which has been so carefully acquired and highly estimated. But God declares all as "filthy rags." If man could do one thing to please God in the work of salvation, the cross of Christ would be of none effect. The very principle of infidelity is to try and do without the Sacrifice of Christ. If man could have become perfect by any Darwinian process of cultivation would God have sent His Son into this scene to confront its spirit of hatred to be made sin and go through the travail of sorrow which death, as the wages of sin, brought upon him? But God is jealous over His own work! He will not compromise with that which bears the stamp of sin which he hates. Sin is the fruit of disobedience, and what is more hateful than a wilful child toward a parent that has lavished upon it all that it required to make it happy. Such is man out of Christ, wilfully hateful, and a child of wrath, and to-day we find two

great opposing forces sustained by man in the world to the truth of God. Ecclesiastical error, based upon superstition and deception on the one hand, and rank openly-avowed infidelity based upon human reason and self-will on the other. The former is made up of the fruits of apostasy, fleshy religiousness, traditional superstitions and ritualism, having a "form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The latter is composed of those who deny God's estimate of man as fallen, of clubs and societies gathered together to deify humanity and denying the simple, plain statements of the Word of God, thus making God a liar by their writings and acts. All the hatred and opposition to God, of an organized character, can be resolved into these two great channels. We appeal to the youthful and unsuspecting readers of these pages to beware of the crafty wiles of those who propagate false doctrine and lead away the unwary by their serpentine arguments and clever efforts. They are described in the Word of God as "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," Jude 13. Also they are "wells without water, clouds that are carried away with a tempest, to whom the mists of darkness are reserved forever," II Peter, iii, 17. Thus while they endeavor to deny and disprove God's Word, they stand as a living proof of its description of themselves. We close this brief effort with a word of exhortation to Christians. Let us not forget the high and holy calling in which we are associated with the blessed Lord. As "members of His body, of His flesh and His bones," we are set forth down here to represent Him, to witness of Him in the manifestation of His Spirit, and "stand in the evil day and having done all to stand!" This means much as we endeavor to practice it, and requires much dependence on Him who alone can sustain and keep us, and "bring us off more than conquerors,

through Him that loved us," in every conflict. We are not called to join issues with the world, and to enter into arenas of strife for distinction in any way. Its politics, military glory, amusements, and various avenues to popularity and fancied greatness belong to the worldling and not to the Christian. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth." The moment we step aside and enter its lists for place and power we betray the potsherd character. "Contend for the faith" we will as a necessity, if we are actively faithful. It is in this path the Lord would have us when He comes for us. He is coming. To the expectant, spiritual soul, "the time is short." May our lights be burning and our armor bright with service. Dear reader, if you have meditatively gone over these pages, we trust your soul has been profited. At least you have been brought face to face with solemn and eternal truths, having for their mission the enlargement of your heart in the things of God if you are a Christian, and if you are not a Christian, their mission to you is to arouse you to a sense of your condition and bring you face to face with One to whom you *must* bow the knee sooner or later, if not *willingly* now, in a day of grace, *forcibly* you will bow in a day of judgment. But Oh how different the results to your own soul! Bow to Jesus *now*, and "glory, honor, immortality and eternal life" are yours with the Lord forever. Bow in judgment, and the second death in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels will surely be your portion! God's Word declares it! We leave the solemn alternative with you, asking, beseeching you to "be ye reconciled to God." Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

PROPHECY,

SPIRITUAL AND MATERIALISTIC, CONTRASTED.

From the newly awakened interest in the subject of prophecy which everywhere pervades all classes of spiritual and moral intelligences, we may safely conclude that some very important event is soon to take place. The virgins are rousing from their long careless sleep and are beginning to "trim their lamps and be ready" for some long expected but carelessly regarded event which should terminate their drowsy waitings, bring in the full realities of expectation, and present the complete fruition of long delayed hopes. The midnight cry, "behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him!" has gone forth more than half a century since, and there is a general spirit of enquiry concerning the rise of the Morning Star, who is to bring in deliverance to his own ones from their weary earthly pilgrimage, and take them up to be with Himself to share the royal inheritance which He has gone to prepare for them. It is important to remark that there are two classes of virgins mentioned in the parable, "five wise and five foolish," Mat. xxv, 2. What is the distinguishing feature that marks out this difference of character. They are all *virgins* and all have lamps, but the five wise have oil in their lamps while the five foolish have no oil. It is the evidence of wisdom to have everything complete, and to have a lamp with the oil in it shows a full preparation to *shine* on some important occasion when required. But to possess a lamp *without oil*, without that which emits the light, is both foolish and hypocritical. No matter how beautiful the lamp may be or how well trimmed, if it lack the oil it only presents the degree of folly more prominently as its possession is valued. What is this oil that marks out such a difference in the practical application of the parable? It is the Holy Ghost

which fills and gives light to the one who has the lamp of profession of discipleship to the Lord Jesus. It is this oil of the Spirit that enables him to shine as a light in the world, and unites him to Christ his risen Head in the glory. It is this indwelling oil of the Spirit that not only comforts the believer, but takes of the things of God and shows them to him. But the one who lacks it may make a loud profession, may talk fluently of the works of God in nature, and present many fine themes for the intellect of man to play upon, yet when he attempts to enter into the marriage feast he will find the door shut. In the study of prophecy it is important that we distinguish between that which is the work of the Holy Spirit, and that which results from scientific investigations of natural phenomena. Spiritual prophecy is that which is revealed to the understanding of the spiritual man who has the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, to give understanding in the things of God. As it is written, "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of *man* the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them *unto us* by His Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things yea the deep things of God ! 1 Cor. ii, 9, 10. Here is the difference declared in God's own Word between the Christian and the mere professor, between the wise and the foolish virgins. Spiritual prophecy, which reveals the hidden purposes and plans of God yet to be accomplished, cannot be understood and entered into intelligently by the natural man. And why ? Because it is only the Christian who "has received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God : that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words *which man's wisdom teacheth*, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Now mark the difference between this position and that of the natural man : "But the natu-

ral man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, though he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him. But we have the mind of Christ," vs. 12-16. Here we have the contrast again presented between the spiritual and material, between that which comes from God and that which only the natural man can lay claim to. "There is nothing *new* under the sun because under the sun is nature's place, and the natural man can only judge from a stand point in the flesh, can only estimate from the material of nature, and hence can only draw such conclusions which the uncertainty of natural phenomena present. What God has revealed from Heaven where He dwells, to the believer through His Word as applied to the understanding by the Holy Spirit, can only be received by the *new nature* in the Christian, which new nature is "Christ formed within, the hope of glory," and is brought into activity by the power and energy of the Holy Ghost. We see then that the old Adam nature whose place is under the sun, or under the elements of nature, has no power to grasp and understand that which is only revealed to believers who "have sprung from death unto life," or who are made anew in Christ. Viewing from this position of contrast we propose to look into prophecy briefly, with a view to present the claims of spiritual prophecy in contrast with those of a material character. To begin with the general character of the Old Testament prophecies, they were the result of the Holy Ghost acting upon the spiritual vision of "holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Peter 1-21. All the Old Testament prophecies have reference to God's chosen nation, the Jews, and to Christ the Messiah as King. They knew nothing of the church of God which is the body of Christ.

The church is "the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Eph. iii, 5. The whole scope of Old Testament prophecy we again repeat, has a direct bearing upon God's dealings with His earthly people and the Gentile nations. It is important to see this in the outset, before we take up any special point or train of prophetic statement. Hence it has reference to dealings in time or stated periods of duration. The "*present interval*," in which a work is going forward of taking out a "people for the name of the Lord," is not a work of specified time, and has nothing to do with "times and seasons." This fact should be borne in mind very distinctly, as it will aid to clear up much in the course of our meditations, which would otherwise appear as confusion. The burthen of the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, as well as of the lesser prophets, as they are sometimes called, foretall Israel's dispersion and restoration back into their own land, first in a state of apostasy, then to be dealt with in judgment, and afterward as a remnant at the opening of the millennium reign, to be received as the central nation of God's favor and blessing on earth, to serve under God as the means through which the Gentile nations, are to receive blessing, Is. lxi, 3-10. The prophet Daniel has presented prophecy in a definite manner as to times and purposes, hence it is an easy task to harmonise his prophecies with the known history of Israel and the nations, and link them up with those of the book of Revelation written by St. John. For our present purpose, then in the main, we will confine ourselves to Daniel's prophecy, with perhaps a few references to other of the prophets as the Lord may direct.

Daniel had been carried captive to Babylon at the time Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonish king took Jerusalem, and was one of the Jewish children chosen to

stand in the king's palace to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans, (Dan. i, 3-6.) But Daniel and his three companions refused the king's meat and chose pulse and water for their diet, and the result was they had fairer and fatter countenances at the end of ten days than those children who were fed on the king's meat and wine. "As for those four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams," vs. 8-19. At the proper time for returning an answer concerning their abilities, Daniel and his companions were "ten times better" advanced in wisdom than all the astrologers and magicians in the kingdom, v. 20. It may be well to here state in brief, the cause of these Jewish captives being in the hands of the Babylonish king. It was not a mere freak of fortune or human conquest, for God had a purpose in it which it is well for us to review by the help of the Holy Spirit who alone can make plain the things of God to the understanding. The ten tribes of Israel had revolted, leaving Judah and Benjamin true to the throne of David, and had been carried into captivity by the Assyrians for their idolatry. Judah and Benjamin in turn had suffered captivity as we have seen by the king of Babylon, for their pride. The temporal power which had been vested in the Jewish nation, was taken from them, they were now "Lo Ammi" (not my people saith the Lord), and their harps were on the willow in a strange land. God was now about to transfer the temporal power into the hands of the Gentiles, and he prepared His prophet Daniel to understand "visions and dreams," that he might reveal to the Babylonish king the character of this change. How wonderful God controls in the affairs of men, to the furtherance of His purposes and for His own glory. The second chapter of Daniel describes the dream and the interpretation thereof by Daniel, which the king saw in the vision of the night. The king for-

got his dream which troubled him exceedingly, and he required the wise men of his realm, not only to tell the dream but the interpretation thereof. This they were unable to do, which the king persists in requiring of them under pain of death if they failed. The decree included Daniel and his companions, and when it reached their ears, Daniel announced his readiness to tell and interpret the dream, which he did to the satisfaction of the king and in accordance with the purpose of God, Dan. ii, 17-46. The image which the king saw in his dream symbolized the "times of the Gentiles," or the course of Gentile dominion, from the Babylonian reign down to the overthrow of the false Messiah in the last days. Its head of gold (v. 38) was the Babylonian rule, and the most absolute and perfect form of human government. When the king of Babylon issued a decree it was obeyed and enforced as soon as it was announced. The breast and arms of silver, (v. 39.) the next in order of value, was represented by the Medo-Persian empire. The irreversible decrees of the Medes and Persians have long since passed into a proverb, and although they were very absolute in their character, they showed a lower type of government than the Babylonian. The "belly and thighs of brass" (v. 40) was shown in the Grecian empire, which overthrew the Medo-Persian, and succeeded in the government of the world. The "legs of iron" (v. 41) were seen in the Roman empire which rose with such strength and power as to subdue all the others and brake them into pieces. The "feet part of iron and part of clay" are clearly seen in the mixed governments of the present day, (v. 42.) The kingly or executive portion of the government serves as a check to the representative portion, and the representative serves as a check upon the other. "They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." It is in this last and weakest form of government that the ten toes of the image are developed

as the ten kings or "horns" which cover the Roman Empire area of Europe, and which overturn the papal or ecclesiastical power, for "they shall hate the whore and burn her with fire, Rev. xvii, 12-17. We see from scripture that the course of the "times of the Gentiles" which begun with the Babylonian "head of gold," close under the dominion of these ten kings who confederate together to give their power to the beast, and led on by him will make war with the Lamb, with the true Messiah when He shall come forth to reign, and "the Lamb shall overcome them ; for He is Lord of lords and King of kings ; and they that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful," vs. 13, 14. The course of this world's empire *as it now is*, thus ends in making war against Christ and the church of God ! What a solemn fact for the consideration of the child of God, as he is asked to cast his vote to put man into power now ! The very power he is now lending his influence to sustain is that which makes war upon his Lord and himself too, as a member of the church of God. Christian think of this when you are importuned to "vote in the best man," *as men say*, and just reply, "I will wait till my Lord comes to reign, and I will then reign with Him." Christian, "when Christ our life shall appear then shall ye also appear with Him in glory," (Col. iii, 4), and that appearing will be with executive power, after the marriage of the Lamb has taken place in heaven with the church His heavenly bride, (Rev. xix, 1), and after He has taken His own executive throne to reign and comes forth as the Rider on the white horse followed by the armies of Heaven which is the church, (vs. 11-14.) We have thus diverged from the course of prophetic events, to touch upon the attitude of the Christian toward the world, and before leaving this point would consider his position toward the CAMP, as it is called. The camp is the religious element characterised by the world, and is that which clamored for and procured the death of the

Lord Jesus. It was outside the Jewish camp, outside the system of Judaism in Jerusalem, that the Lord was crucified, and it is outside of this same *camp, that is so in spirit*, that we are now called to go as faithful followers of the Lord, "bearing His reproach." If we faithfully take the place of testimony for Him, we will surely bear His reproach. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." But Christ the Head in the glory is in sympathy with all His tried ones and will give them that comfort which it is His alone to give, and the joy which only attends faithfulness and devotion to Himself. Let us take up again the thread of prophecy as we find it carried forward in the book of Daniel. We have briefly shown its application to the course of Gentile empire, or to the "Times of the Gentiles." We will now consider its application to "Israel," as a nation. Daniel desires prophetic light as to Israel, and it is in the first year of Darius, son of Ahasuerus, that was made king of the Chaldeans, that Daniel "understood by books the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem," v. 1. But before Daniel gets further light respecting Israel he humbles himself and confesses his own sins and the sins of the people of Israel, vs. 3-20. While he is thus engaged, Gabriel, the angel especially entrusted with messages to Israel, informed him of the prophecy concerning his people. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish the transgressions and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy," v. 20. The term "week" in the Hebrew is a measure of seven. The week here means seven *years*. This is evident from its application with reference to other stated times, as we shall see. The angel continues,

“know therefore and understand that the going forth of the commandment to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks, (sixty-nine *weeks* or 483 *years*,) the street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublous times. And *after* three-score and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off but not for Himself.” Here we would remark that the ministry of John of three years and a half, and that of Christ of three and a half years, made up the last week of the prophecy, if the nations of Israel had acknowledged their true Messiah. But they reject the offered week of grace by crucifying their true king, and they get a week of judgment under the false Messiah yet to come as the Lord told them before. “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not, if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive,” St. John v, 43. A remnant of Judah and Benjamin, (the two tribes that crucified their Lord), will during the last or judgment week, *in spirit*, “look upon Him whom they pierced” and mourn deeply, when they realise that it was their true Messiah whom they had crucified, Zech. xii, 10-14. “And the people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” The “people” here spoken of are clearly the Roman army under Titus, that besieged and took the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple after the Messiah was cut off. The “prince that shall come” is the head of the Gentile apostasy, representing the Roman power as it will be in the last days, when the two tribes Judah and Benjamin, or those who are now known as Jews, are gathered back to Jerusalem and Palestine, a work now going on. This “prince” is known in the Revelation as “the beast of seven heads and ten horns, Rev. xiii, 1-8. After Judah and Benjamin are gathered into Palestine in a state of apostasy or unbelief as they now are, and have carried with them much of the wealth of the nations, after they have re-

built the city and temple at Jerusalem in great magnificence, under the fostering care of this "prince that shall come," then "shall he confirm the covenant with many for one week," v. 27. The "many" are the greater part of the Jews thus gathered, and it is then they are entering into a league with Satan, who vainly promises them a Messiah, but he proves a false one as we shall see. "And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, &c," (v. 27) that is, after the temple service has been set up according to the rules and order of Judaism, when three and a half times or years have passed, this "prince" or head of the Gentile power breaks his covenant of protection which he had entered into with the "many" of the Jews, and stops the temple worship that had been set up. Observe, this "prince" is not the false Messiah that "comes in his own name" but is the head of Gentile apostasy and dominion. The real Anti-Christ or false Messiah will be a Jew, and will stand at the head of the *Jewish* apostasy. To understand this more fully, let us refer to Dan. xi, 36-30. "And the "king" shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God, and speak marvellous things against the God of gods, &c. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of woman nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honor the god of forces, and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones and pleasant things." A moment of quiet meditation over this scripture will serve to prove that this wilful king is a Jew. In the first place the Jews will not receive a king who has not come through the regular line, and that is the tribe of Judah. Christ their true Messiah whom they crucified, is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," and this false Messiah must imitate Him as far as a human estimate or conception can go. "Neither

shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, &c." The God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, peculiarly characterizes the true God as of the Jews first, and also of the Gentiles after Christ came into the scene to make both one by "breaking down the middle wall of partition between them." The term "fathers" especially refers to the Jewish worthies of the earlier days of the nation's history, and "the God of his fathers," this wilful apostate Jewish leader will utterly disregard in the last days. "Nor the desire of women." Who was the desire of women spoken of here? Evidently the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! It was the desire of every godly Jewish woman to become the mother of the Messiah, and it was a reproach in Israel for a woman to die childless. So this faithless, wilful king, after man's estimate, does not regard the Father or the Son, but trusting in an arm of flesh, honors the "god of forces," and serves Satan as an especial instrument to withstand the true Messiah, whom the pharisaical spirit of the nation of Israel despised and rejected as well as crucified, Is. *iii*, 2-6.

This wilful head of the Jewish apostasy is identical with the two-horned beast of Rev. *xiii*, 11. Observe the first beast of "seven heads and ten horns," which heads up the Gentile apostasy rises up out of the *sea*. The sea is an emblem of the Gentile nation, hence this apostate head is clearly known as Gentile from his origin. But the two-horned beast rises up out of the *earth* an apt symbol of the Jewish nation, who are characterized in scripture as God's *earthly people*. This Jewish beast is the same spoken of in 2nd Thess. *ii*, 3-11. In the 4th verse he is known as one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, &c. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, (or hinder) until he be taken out of the way," v. 7. This "he" is the Holy Ghost in the church,

who hinders the manifestation of the real person of the man of sin, until the church is taken up to be with the Lord, the Holy Ghost then is "taken out of the way," and "then shall the wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming," v. 8. The presence of the Holy Ghost in the church on earth "lets" (an English word for "hinder"), the full cropping forth of sin, as it will be after the church is caught up to be ever with the Lord, 2 Thess. iv, 16-18. The church is in Heaven with the Lord before the full manifestation of the Anti-Christ power. The word to the church in Philadelphia is a striking proof of this. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth, Rev. iii, 10. Apostate Christendom and the infidel Jews will be on the earth after the church is gone, after all who are really born again of the word and of the Holy Ghost are away with their Lord, and upon this unbelieving mass "God shall send a strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii, 11, 12. This man of sin "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders," will "do great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from Heaven on the earth in the sight of man, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, &c.," Rev. xiii, 13, 14. By means of electricity, &c., he will appear to make fire come down out of Heaven, for he must make a show of doing miracles to sustain his pretensions to Messiahship, and by means of ventriloquism evidently he will "cause the image of the beast to speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

And he causeth all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. The "mark" here will be evidently on the hand to take up arms to sustain his power, and upon the forehead to recognize his power. The number of the beast is 666, which is the number of man, 777, being God's perfect number, and this false Christ is known by his number as being no more than man, and by this his falsity and pretensions may be known to the mind that has wisdom to know what God's number is. These two beasts which we have been considering in Rev. xiii, are the same that we see again in the 19th chapter as the beast and false prophet, vs. 19, 20. The "beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, the ten kings and their followers," is the head of the Gentile apostasy, while the false prophet is the head of the Jewish apostasy. These two active agents of Satan, or the "dragon" as he is called, are taken and "cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone," v. 20. Thus wicked man gets the lake of fire one thousand years before Satan himself. At the same time that they are cast into the lake of fire, Satan is cast into the bottomless pit. chap, xx, 2, 3. This takes place at the opening of the millennium when the Lord comes forth with the church (the armies of Heaven), as we have seen (chap. xix, 14-21), to judge the wicked "quick" or living. The wicked "dead" are brought into resurrection life at the close of the millennium, and judged at the Great White Throne, Rev. xx, 11-15. The resurrection of all who have died in Christ *before* the rapture (or taking up) of the church, have a part in the first resurrection. This is plain from Rev, xx, 4-7, that the first resurrection embraces all such, while the second resurrection includes all those who die out of Christ and who get the lake of fire after the White Throne judgment, v. 15. The martyred remnant of Israel are brought into resurrection life, and occupy a heavenly position at the close

of the last week of Daniel's 70th week of judgment. Under the opening of the fifth seal, their souls are seen under the altar crying, "how long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth," Rev. vi, 10. Vengeance is a Jewish cry, but the church will not cry for vengeance, and like her Head will exclaim, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." It is not the spirit of Christ in the church to call for vengeance in any way, but to suffer in the patience of the Head who endured all the persecutions through which He passed with meekness and long-suffering. When the "sea of glass" is first seen by John, it has no occupants, (Rev. iv, 6) but when it is again seen (chap. xv, 2) it is occupied by those who "had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, &c.," clearly showing that it is the Jewish and Gentile remnants that suffered at the hands of the beast because they owned the true Messiah. When the sea of glass is first seen it is "clear as crystal," (chap. iv, 6) but after it is occupied it is "mingled with fire," showing the fiery trial its occupants had passed through. This evidently is the baptism of fire of which John the Baptist spake, Mat. iii, 11.

It may be well to review in brief the order of events over which we have been passing. The work now going on (we repeat) is the choosing out of the church under the ministry of the Holy Ghost. This is God's testimony for Himself! To carry on this work *manward*, the gospel of the grace of God is preached alike to all. It is by the foolishness of preaching men are to be saved. The course of the Gentile empire is running as ordered of God, to preserve order and restrain the wicked that God's work may go forward. But Christians must not forget that the *character* of this Gentile course is worldly and ungodly, and that for them to mix up with its issues and end is to hinder their testimony and to dishonor their calling. The

first event they are to look for is Christ's coming for them to take them out of this scene to be with Himself.

"The Lord Himself shall come
And shout the quickening word;
Thousands shall answer from the tomb,
Forever with the Lord."

This event may occur at any time! "Behold I come quickly!" Men may say that much is yet to be done before the Lord *can* come to take up His people. His word is, "be ye also ready!" "Times and seasons" are out of the question! The effect of this watching and waiting attitude of the Saints of God is to keep them free from earthly entanglements with their hearts engaged with Christ. He is coming! Is it not enough for us to be ready? What earthly schemes have we to carry out, or plans to mature before we are ready to go with him. Be ready *now*! That is the word. May our hearts be more engaged with Him, and all earthly schemes and plans, with their influences over us will drop off like autumn leaves. After the church is out of the scene, the events that take place are fraught with the manifestation of wickedness and the execution of judgment. Satan and man work energetically, and God deals correspondingly. All the hindering power of the Holy Ghost, which now prevents the unmasking of wickedness will then be removed, and every species of satanic effort be seen and known in its true character. In the opening of the 70th week of Daniel the covenant of the Anti-Christ is entered into with the apostate Jews. During the first half of the week the two witnesses prophecy, (Rev. xi, 3) the spared remnant are convinced of the coming of the true Messiah, and are caught away from the power of the Anti-Christ, Rev. xii, 14, and the first four of the seals are opened and produce their results as shown in Rev. vi, 1-9. In the middle of the week Satan is cast out of Heaven, Rev. xii, 10. The Anti-

Christ as energized by Satan, breaks his covenant with the "many," (Jews) "causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease," and issues the decree that all shall receive his mark upon the forehead and upon the hand. Then begins the 42 months reign of the beast and false prophet with such rigor and energy of evil, that "except the days should be shortened no flesh should be saved." This last half of the "tribulation week," as it is called, is the time of "Jacob's trouble," such as never was known, and never will be again for the poor Jews. *Now*, until the church is taken up out of the scene Satan being sure of the homage of the Jews, (for it is a question of power and homage with him as opposed to Christ,) allows them to amass wealth and consequence among the nations, to return to their land and rebuild the temple and city with great magnificence and carry forward with an arm of flesh and in an apostate condition, such wonderful efforts, that they become the wonder of the world. It is against the church as the "accuser of the brethren," that his principal efforts are now put forth. This is because the church is now in this scene as an object of God's especial care and needs His mercy and protection daily, to carry her through what should seem to her a waste howling wilderness, but which, alas! is often sought to be a bed of roses to revel upon with the world, and enjoy the riches and favors of a scene which crucified her Lord and Head. But after the Lord "descends from Heaven with a shout" and takes His own up to be with Himself, Satan is cast out of Heaven down to earth, and then "woe unto the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the devil is come down unto you with great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. He knows that his power over the church is at an end, and that the faithful remnant in Israel and the Gentiles are next to be the especial object of God's care and attention to bring the earth into blessing. The time Satan has, from the time he as the accuser

of the brethren" (the faithful in Christ) is cast down, (Rev. xii) until he is taken and bound and cast into the bottomless pit, (Rev. xx) is but a "short time" (evidently 42 months), hence he makes the most of it by setting up his most rigorous rule through his willing agents, the beast and false prophet. But the Lord closes his brief season of oppressive triumph by coming forth with executive judgment "followed by the armies of Heaven," (the church) as we have seen, and overturns all that vast array of power which Satan had masked to defy and withstand the Lord. After the beast and false prophet are overthrown at the close of the 1260 days, and their armies slain with sword of Him who sat on the horse, which sword proceedeth out of His mouth, (Rev. xix, 21,) after the "spared remnant" of Judah and Benjamin have been called into blessing at the end of the 1335 days, (Dan. xii, 20) then takes place, the national gathering spoken of in Mat. xxv, 32 when the "nations" receive the reward or sentence, according as they have treated "the least of these my brethren" (v. 40) which the Lord will then own. And who are "my brethren" whom the the Lord then so affectionately owns and values? Not the church, which has been taken out of the scene *before* the tribulation week commenced. No, but the poor spared remnant of the Jews, who had been caught away from the power and sway of the beast, out from the land of Palestine to take refuge among the Gentile nations around, and it was according to the way they had "done unto the least of these my brethren," that the blessed Lord rewards those nations. It is important to see that when the question of earthly blessing comes before the Lord, He first deals with and restores a faithful remnant in *Israel*, and then acts toward the Gentile nations according as they have cared for His faithful Jewish remnant. The faithful Jews, under the persecution of the Anti-Christ, are dear to the Lord as the "little flock" to whom the Father in His good

pleasure would give the kingdom that they had so ardently prayed for. "Thy kingdom come" is their prayer, "Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in Heaven!" It is for *earthly* blessing and enjoyment under the Lord's benign rule, that the faithful remnant will be looking for. It is for *Heavenly* blessing that the church as God's *Heavenly people* are *now* praying for, or should be if they see their true place. The Lord addresses the remnant as He appears to them thus, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," or *after* the world's history had begun its course. The church as His *Heavenly* people, was in the purpose of God seen in Christ *before* the foundation of the world. To note this difference between the *Heavenly* hope of the church and *earthly* hope of the Jew, affords a key by which much confusion may be avoided in reading the scriptures. Christ, as He is now on the Father's throne, is Head to the church while the church is on earth. After He takes His church out of the scene and assumes His own executive throne, He will put the church into governing position with Himself, to come forth and rule the world in the millennium reign. Christ will be king to the Jews, and to the Gentiles who are brought into blessing with the Jewish remnant, but it is not intelligent for the church to call Christ our King now. He is Head of the church as the body, of which we are members, and we are so intimately associated with Him that we share His throne and reign with Him, Rev. iii, 21. It is important that our thoughts are directed in right channels as to God's dealings with the earth, for it seems to rightly interpret prophecy as to what He has in store for the scene through which the church is now taking her journey as a pilgrim and a stranger. With this order of spiritual prophecy in our minds, it is easy to test all material prophecies and speculations by this standard. Man in his efforts to grasp the purposes and plans of the

Infinite God, would endeavor to set up a standard of his own, and set aside God's order of events as revealed in His Word. Whatever stands the test of that Word and agrees with it we can accept with confidence. We are to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," and to give precedence to God's Word as the means by which to test all that may come before us, in its light and by its power. The movements of the material universe cannot change God's order as revealed by the Spirit in His Word, and if we allow the prophecies and speculations of men, as to changes in material things, to shake our minds or disturb our confidence in the word of God, it is evident that we are not well grounded in the Truth, or walking along the path of faith in company with the Lord, learning of Him and confiding in Him. All these things come in as a test to show where we are God-ward. We would know but little of what we can bear for Christ if we were never tested. As soon as we step forth to work for Christ in earnest we will have opposition to test us in the path. But this most precious for us in God's sight. "The trial of your faith is more precious than gold that perisheth." "If a branch bear fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." As sons He chastens us, and if we find the enemy stirring up opposition to us, it is one of the surest evidences that God is about to use us to His own glory. "If we be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." This is surely a source of encouragement for us while under trial and difficulty, that we may not be discouraged by the way, or disturbed in our mind when we are tested. And now we have gone through our meditations together in brief dear reader, on a part of God's order in spiritual prophecy as revealed in His Word by the light of the Holy Spirit, and may we ask what claim has the materialistic prophecies of man upon our notice and confidence? We have

several prophecies of man based upon science and astronomy, which are claiming the attention of all who are willing to accept them as correct, and instead of giving rest of soul and comfort of heart they give anxiety and trouble of mind. This is just the opposite of what Christ gives to those who trust Him. Follow through the scientific forestallings of the professors who have been writing lately for the public eye, and what is there in all their speculations to give rest to the heart of the weary one on life's journey? Nothing! Man in his endeavors to measure the Infinite God by scientific effort, always goes beyond himself and conflicts with God, and thus renders his efforts valueless as tested by God's Word. For example, one professor claims that the coming of the present comet will, upon its entering the sun, so excite his heart that all the higher forms of life will be swept off the earth. God's word declares that we are to have a thousand years of millennium reign in righteousness under the sceptre of Christ the true Messiah, before the world is to be burned up. Which are we to believe, this professor or God's Word. "Let God be true though every man be a liar." How comforting to have a standard from God by which to test everything. Another claims that the conjunction of Saturn and Uranus with the earth is to so unhinge the order of nature, as it now is, as to produce the most dire results in the next few years. According to his (Prof. Grimmell's) theory, war, pestilence and famine will ravage the earth, mountains are to topple and fall into huge chasms caused by earthquakes, islands and reefs are to rise in the sea and obstruct the mariner's progress, and the general disorder produced will be prolific of the most serious results as to human comfort and human life. If *true* what then? What is the word to the Christian? Is he to be fearful and dismayed in the face of these calamities? By no means! "Be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the

Lord," James v, 7. "Stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," v. 8. The Lord's coming is the first event *of any importance* to the Christian that is to take place while he is in this scene, that is if he is living to the Lord and sowing to the Spirit. If the child of God is unwatchful and is getting his best portion in this world instead of looking forward to a Heavenly inheritance, he will be troubled at the prospect of having all his earthly hopes wrecked and set at nought. These things come in sometimes as allowed of God for a test to the souls of His own in this scene. Let us not despise these prophecies of man, but rather use them to see how we stand as to our state of soul in God's presence. If we can allow them all to be true, and still look at them unmoved and undistracted because of our faith in the work God has accomplished in His own Son both as a Saviour and Intercessor to meet our need, it is well for us. But if we are fearful and troubled at the prospect of earthly loss, it is evidence of a weak faith and a carnal walk, no matter how high our standard of profession may be. To the carnal mind who has no portion in Christ, the prospect of earthly loss and discomfort, will no doubt be unpalatable and full of uneasiness. The man who is getting his best portion in this life, little relishes the thought of being deprived of it. To such we would say, seek a portion in Christ which the changing circumstances of time and sense cannot touch and destroy. In Christ you will find a life that is *eternal*, and that means above all the things that are passing away. May you exchange your earthly uncertainties for Heavenly realities. Amen.

Near Ottawa, April 4, 1881.

JESUS DIED ON CALVARY.

1. Jesus died ! He died for sinners !
 Was made sin, ere He could die ;
 Died His Father's will to obey ;
 Died for, sinner, you and me.

2. Oh how solemn is the story
Of that death, the world to buy;
How the heart in grief should languish,
As we know it, you and I.
3. Let all of nature hush within us ;
Leave no room for flesh to play,
As we think of Calvary's murder
On that solemn mournful day.
4. ^{that} On ~~that~~ day when nature trembled,
Earth did quake, with darkened sun,
When Jesus cried " 'Tis finished " ever,
And Heaven answered then, " 'Tis done ! "
5. But He rose ! How glad the story !
Burst the bonds of death asain ;
Rose to justify His own ones,
No more to taste of death again.
6. On His Father's throne in Heaven,
He waits until His foes be made
His footstool, thence He'll come and take us
Up, for whom the debt was paid.
7. May we ne'er forget His death, now
As we journey here below ;
But remember how He suffered
On that cross so long ago.

The Treasure in Earthen Vessels.

" But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." II Cor. iv, 7.

The death of Christ has done more for the believer than to cancel his sins, valuable as that work may be for his soul. In Christ, the Christian has not only died to sin as to its nature, but is put into a place of power to count the old Adam, in the place of death, that he may not bring forth his baneful fruit. We have the treasure of the Holy Ghost in earthen vessels that the *excellency of the power* may be of God and not of us. The new nature, which is " Christ formed within the hope of glory," is the ground upon which

the Holy Ghost works to bring forth fruit unto God. The old Adam nature is what the flesh in activity acts upon to bring forth *sin*. The *fruits* of the Spirit are "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." The *works* of the flesh in contrast with the *fruits* of the Spirit are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Gal. v. 21, 22. The child of God is not only privileged to "reckon" or count the old nature in the place of death, but he is responsible to do so in his earthly pilgrimage, that he may glorify God in his body which belongs to God. While the flesh is acting to produce sin, it is impossible for the Holy Ghost to act with power upon the new nature to bring forth fruit unto God. By the death of the old man as put to death on the cross working in Paul, life in Christ was produced in the Corinthians. "So then death worketh in us, but life in you," II Cor., iv-12. The fruit of Paul's "reckoning" the old man in the place of death, was life in Christ to his beloved Corinthian brethren. This counting the old man dead, was "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and why? That the life also of Jesus (the new nature) might be manifest in our mortal flesh. v. 10. To enter into this in reality is very helpful to the soul of the Christian. He learns by this exercise, that "in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." This acknowledgment is something more than a mere matter of words, it is the utterance of a practical, solemn, divine reality. It is only in this state of soul that the Christian can be to any prominent degree, used of God in service. He goes down to the bottom (so to speak) of all that he is in the old Adam, finds no good in him, and learns that the poor body in which the new life dwells, and which has become a temple, a dwell-

ing place of the Holy Ghost, is but an "earthen vessel." It is this "vile body," this body of humiliation, that is to be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," when Christ comes for the church. How much training and chastening each individual soul needs to practically enter into this "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," the Lord Himself only knows. He may allow us to stumble and fall into sin even, and then chasten us, to learn our own weakness, and the need of walking softly before Him in our path of testimony for Himself. There is a deep significance in the word "earthen" which qualifies the vessel. Clay, or earth is the poorest kind of material for endurance, or for service. It is in such poor weak vessels, that are crumbling away day by day, (though our outward man perish) that the treasure is put, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. How humbling to all creature-excellence this is. What is the ultimate of the highest hopes of natural goodness? "Filthy rags," God says. Where does human wisdom, with all its boasted power, end? Look at the Cross of Christ! There in the sin-judged body of God's Son, is its most exalted height. Ah poor, vain human excellence, God's foolishness is above your wisest and most sublime flights; and when the Christian has learned this lesson of nothingness which the natural man knows nothing of, then he is in the place where God can teach him, that the "excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." God will have the glory of our efforts for Himself by "working within us to will and do of His own good pleasure." Spiritual pride, Pharisaical egotism, intellectual knowledge which "puffeth up," are great hindrances to learning the lesson of self judgment. How much do Christians spend of their substance to extravagantly feed and clothe their bodies while God's work and God's poor alike languish for their misapplied stewardship. Dear

brother, or sister in Christ, "fruit may abound to your account" at the judgment seat of Christ as a result of fully entering into the reality of this *earthen* character of the vessel. It may correct many high estimations of self you may have, check much useless expenditure in the way of dress and food, and open your eyes to the blessed value of denying self and working for Christ. "Though our outward man perish yet our inward man is renewed day by day," v. 16. The poor earthen vessel may be crumbling away, yet the soul may be prospering in the things of God, and renewed for increased activity in doing the work God has for it to do. Sometimes a sick bed and a diseased body are necessary to take down our self-exaltation and fit us for profitable use in the Master's work. Earthly ties and heart-idols often are taken away to liberate the worker and leave him free to do his Master's will. The yoke of oxen, the wife, the land and all must in spirit be left to give place to the higher work which God has for us to do for Himself. May we enter into it! It may try our hearts to thus be required to give place to God's demands upon us, may test our love and give us pain, but what then? "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," v. 17. All we give up of nature for God, comes back with a thousand-fold value by and by. What weight of glory can natural excellence bring us? None indeed! It is giving up all for God that admits a ray of the glory to shine into the soul.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, while the things which are not seen are eternal," v. 18. It is faith then and not sight that gives the rich glimpses of eternal things. How prone we are to judge from appearance and not righteous judgment. Righteous judgment is the fruit

of soul-exercise in the presence of God. The sight of the eye as to nature is worth little in His estimate who reads the motives of the heart as well as the actions of the body. Spiritual discernment comes from the power we have to enter within the veil and take in God's thoughts about everything. How much wrong judgment we may have about our fellow Christian by mounting the pinnacle of natural estimate, while we should be judging self to get at God's thoughts about him or her. If we misjudge and carry our fellow Christians with us in our wrong thoughts, then indeed we take courage in pushing our point and may only be forced to learn our mistake at the end of much mortification and anguish of heart. It is only in going along the path in company with the blessed Lord alone that we get at the real estimate of things. A false appearance may be put upon everything around us, if nature come in in any way to bias our view, and because we have got others to see in our way, we rush on regardless of what God says about what we really are before Him. "If any man *think* that he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall." It does not say "if any man *standeth*," &c., no it is if he think he does. "If any *say* he has faith," let him put himself under the test of self-examination and see how he will be able to bear it. He may, in fancied self-security and self-deception, be rushing down upon some poor soul with a flood of condemnation that arises from sheer ignorance and want of true Christian love which the Lord in the glory desires to see drawing His poor tried ones down here nearer to each other and nearer to Himself. And now one word about love, which is a kindred theme to our present train of meditations, and we close this brief paper. The "love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us," and this as a result of a divine work which has gone on in the soul as a fruit of the Holy Ghost being in the vessel *ungrieved*.

Patience has wrought experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, "for the love of God is shed abroad in the heart," &c. The third Person of the Holy Trinity working unhindered in the soul has produced a train of godly results constituting the true ground of all fellowship one with another and with the Head, *Love*. The love of God, who can fathom it? And yet it is shed abroad in our hearts, in the ungrieved possession of the treasure which we have in earthen vessels. Reader do you enter into it? May the Lord give us all to see its divine reality.—Amen.

THE HOUSE-TOP SAINT.

The following lines were abbreviated from a little prose tract called the "House-top Saint." They show the strength of faith often seen in the negro character.

1. I'se livin on de house top,
Aunt Sybil said one day,
So near my blessed Master
He easy hears me pray.
2. De smiles ob His blessed countenance
Lights up my pathway here,
And when I feels de wilderness,
Is when I finds Him near.
3. De joy ob His own dear heart
Gibs mine a freshnin beat,
For I'se a member ob His body,
In Him I'se so complete.
4. De cellar wid its 'ticements,
De parlor wid its smiles,
No, nor de easy chamber,
Can win me wid dere wiles.
5. For I'se out on de ridge pole,
Wid my blessed Master dar,
A keepin His dear company;
His c'munion dere I share.
6. I often hab temptations
From Satan on de way,
But my Jesus gibs me promise,
My strength is as my day.

7. So I push my enemy 'hind me,
And look up to de sky,
For dere I'se got a 'heritance
To enter by and by.
8. An I know my Master's comin
To take me off de ruff,
An when He takes me higher,
He'll say "Sybil 'tis enough."
9. So I goes along de journey,
Leanin on His arm,
For I know His love will keep me
Foreber from all harm.
10. And now poor sinner would you
Be on the house-top too?
De sta'rs dat I climbed up on
Are ready dar for you.
11. Ye cellar, parlor, chamber saints,
Climb from dose lower parts,
And on de ridge-pole, for de Lord,
Shine out wid all your hearts.
12. And as I've told my story,
I'll hurry to my work,
Lest after I've been preachin,
I might my duty shirk.

The Opened Heavens.

There is a train of meditation very comforting to the Christian, connected with the opened Heavens, when once entered into with the heart unhindered and the spirit unburdened of the power of earthly circumstances. The Heavens are opened four times as mentioned in the Scriptures. First, when Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, as "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven which said, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased." Mat. iii, 17, 17: Mark i, 10, 11; Luke iii, 21, 22. The opening of the Heavens is always connected with a manifestation of testimony or power toward the earth. Here the Lord is shown as fulfilling all righteousness

by being baptized (Mat. iii, 15.) by John, that He might obey and observe God's order as to Israel. He came as King to the Jews, offered Himself as such, but their worldly-minded rulers rejected His humble parentage and set aside His gracious offerings by calling for His death. Secondly, the Heavens opened when Stephen was stoned, so that he testified that he saw the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Acts vii, 5, 6. Stephen was the Lord's witness for the Holy Ghost after the Spirit descended, consequent upon the ascension of the blessed Lord to the right hand of the Father. The Lord is seen in a standing position, looking down to earth to see how His faithful servant, Stephen, would be received by the nation of Israel. But they rejected the testimony and slew the witness, Stephen, and the Lord sits down at the right hand of God, expecting henceforth until His enemies be made His footstool. Thirdly, the Heavens opened when St. John saw a door opened in Heaven, and heard a voice saying "come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter, (*or after these*, which is the history of the church). John saw the order of Heaven in preparation for the manifestation of judgment upon the earth, also the position of the church, seen as the twenty-four elders around about the throne near the blessed Lord Himself. The seal, vial and trumpet judgments are about to descend upon the earth, upon apostate Israel and the Gentiles that are in league with the Jews and are marshalled in Palestine in a position of conflict and defiance to the blessed Lord. The fourth opening of the Heavens shows the Lord Himself as the Rider on the white horse, coming forth in executive judgment to destroy and put down the opposition of Satan on earth and set up the millennium reign. Rev. xix, 11-16. The promise to the church now is, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Col. iii, 4-11. The appear-

ing as the "armies of heaven" with Christ in executive judgment, shows this promise fulfilled to the church. The apostle writing to the Corinthians says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" I Cor. vi, 2, 3. Here is clear proof that the church of God, in executive judgment with Christ, will judge the world and the apostate angels that left their first estate. Although now in a place of rejection as Christ was when He was upon the earth, the church of God should show forth the pilgrim character, not settling down to *dwell* in a scene where Satan "the god of this world" holds dominion and has his throne. Meantime may we be watching and waiting for the Lord to come and take us out of a scene that is ripening up for judgment. What are some of the effects of the appearing of Christ with the church? The groaning creation, now under the curse of sin, will be brought into a condition of deliverance and blessing. "For the earnest expectation of the creature (or creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God. Because the creature (creation) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty or liberty of the glory of the children of God." Rom. viii, 19-21. What wondrous results earthward depend upon the opening of the Heavens for the manifestation of Christ with the church. Then all that Christ suffered on the Cross for, all the wondrous fruits of the travail of His soul will appear in all their power and glory, being powerful and glorious because connected so intimately with Himself, who is the source of all power and glory. He is the God-Man whom God hath appointed to judge the world in righteousness, and all His own ones, who now faithfully own Him as the rejected Man, will then appear with all the fruits of their testimony seen by the world even as

Christ now sees and values them. The thorns and thistles that now cover the earth as a result of the curse on account of sin, will be removed, the ferocity of the wild beasts will give place to domestic docility, and "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them, and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Is. xi, 6-10.

Such are some of the features of that day of peace, when the Branch of Jesse shall bring forth with power His fruits of "peace on earth and good will to man." Then will be fully enjoyed by the nation of Israel and the Gentiles, all those blessed conditions of soul spoken of by our Lord in His sermon on the mount in Matthew, chapters 5, 6 and 7. Then will a remnant of Israel be brought into blessing and form a nucleus around which the Gentiles will gather and receive blessing through the ministrations of the faithful Jews, (Is, lxi, 3-8.) and when "ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you for we have heard that God is with you." Zech. viii, 23. It is then that God will "take away the heart of stone and give a heart of flesh" to His faithful Jewish remnant, and through their ministry a nation is born in a day. Then shall it come to pass when a man shall not say unto His neighbor "know the Lord for all shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest." Jer. xxxi, 34. What a glorious prospect God has in store for His church and His earthly people when the "dispensation of the fulness of times"

is ushered in under the righteous rule of Christ, the true King, the blest and only potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In that millennial dispensation Christ will complete or fill up, with His own perfect reign, all the "times" or dispensations which man has failed to perform under the positions of responsibility in which he has acted as a responsible agent to God. So perfect will be the reign of righteousness, that sin will be dealt with as soon as it is committed. Then shall be gathered the sorrowing outcasts of Israel back to their former inheritance with joy and blessing.

"Therefore shall they come and sing in the height of Zion and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all." Jer. xxxi, 12.

"O blessed scene of endless joy,
When Jesus shall forever reign,
When nothing hurtful can annoy,
And gladness fills the happy plain,
Free from all sin and free from fear,
None shall e'er sigh or shed a tear.

And now by way of review, we would remark that each of these openings of the Heavens mark out a distinct dispensation or season of grace and judgment. The first and second openings show grace and the third and fourth show judgment. The first shows the opening of the Lord's personal ministry to the nation of Israel, and His office of Prophet or teacher of the principles of the kingdom which was then "at hand" for the reception of the Jews as a nation. His order was for the the restoration of Israel first, and then disciple the nations afterwards. As a proof of this, when He first sends out the twelve disciples it is only to Israel as a nation. "Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any of the cities of the Samaritans,

enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach, saying the kingdom of Heaven (or from Heaven) is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Mat. x, 5-9. He lays down their line of ministry and sets up the course of effort that would have been pursued had the kingdom been received by the Jews, and which will be carried out in the millennium yet to come, when Israel will be brought into blessing, and established in the land. Mark reader, it was the gospel of the kingdom they were to preach, the kingdom which was rejected, but which will be set up by and by, when Christ with His church comes to reign. Keep this thought distinct from the gospel of the grace of God, which is now preached, to take out a people for the name of the Lord. The character of their ministry for the kingdom was that of sight, as having the power of miracles to perform in the sight of men as proof of their power and ministry, as the Lord Himself did. *Now*, it is a ministry of *faith* through the work of the Holy Ghost, both as to those who minister, and they who are ministered unto. The word is spoken with power and is applied by the Holy Spirit to the understanding of the believer, even to give him faith to believe. This is not a dispensation of testimony by miracles to the sight of the believer, but of faith in the testimony of a crucified and risen Christ. In Matthew's gospel, which is prominently the gospel that brings out the kingdom, we have the discipling of the nations enjoined as the last injunction before he leaves them to go to Heaven. This going to the nations (Mat. xxviii, 19, 20.) is also a part of the work that will be perfected in the millennium and which is not carried forward now in the sense that it will be then. *Then*, the result of ministry to the Gentile nations will be, "a *nation* shall be born in a day," and "*all* shall know the Lord, from the least to the

greatest." *Now*, it is "taking out a people for the name of the Lord," a work peculiarly unique and consonant with a time when "wicked men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," and when all kinds and systems of evil are going on with speed to their ultimate end, which is judgment. Instead of a nation being born in a day now, it is only here and there a few individuals, comparatively speaking, who are manifested by the preached word as the elect of God, seen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and which form the Church of God. A national conversion to God we cannot have until Christ comes to set up His millennium reign.

"He came unto His own (the Jews) and His own received Him not, (as a nation) but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe in His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." St. John i, 11-13. The Jews, led on by the Scribes and Pharisees, treated Him as an impostor, rejected His offer of the Kingdom and demanded His crucifixion at the hands of the Roman power. "But God raised Him from the dead." After His resurrection He ascended up to the Father and the Holy Ghost came down in accordance with the promise He had made to the disciples before He was crucified. St. John xiv, 16, 17. This "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." v. 26. "Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come. (Mat xvi, 13.) Such is the office-work of the Holy Ghost now in the believer, and if ungrieved and unhindered, delights to engage the heart with Christ

and to unfold the things of God to the patient, trusting child of God. After the Holy Ghost descended at Pentecost, the testimony of the faithful Stephen is put before the Jews. Acts vi, 8 to the end of chap. vii. He was especially a witness for the Holy Ghost to the Jews and his testimony was powerful and full of reproof toward them, for the rejection of their true Messiah, "and they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spoke." chap. vi, 10. He rehearsed to them in brief, the nation's history, spoke of their unfaithfulness, accused them of resisting the Holy Ghost as their fathers did, of slaying the prophets who foretold of Christ, and of betraying and murdering the just One, and of breaking the law given by the disposition of angels, v. 51-54. This faithful testimony so enraged them that they gnashed on him with their teeth, and "He being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, behold I see the Heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." v. 54-56. This testimony was still more than they could bear. The man they had called an impostor, this man Jesus, whom they had demanded should be crucified, was seen and owned by Stephen as at the right hand of God, in the very presence of God. This they could not let pass without manifesting their deepest hatred, and "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord and cast him out of the city and stoned him, * * * and they stoned Stephen calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep." vs. 57-60. Here we have the suffering of the martyr standing out in marked contrast with the ferocity of the persecutors. The testimony Stephen brings out reveals the dark-

ness of their hearts, and all the sinful resistance of their corrupt natures is roused into active energy by Satan's power. But the character of the present day of grace and forbearance comes out in Stephen's prayer, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," in strict accordance with the Lord on the Cross, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." And this should be the cry of the church in imitation of her Head while she is left in the scene. May the Lord give us grace to utter it!

The ministry of the Holy Ghost in this day of God's grace, if unhindered by the flesh in the believer, engages the heart with Christ, which serves to impress His character upon the obedient child of God. We take character from the object of our heart's occupation. As the meditations of our hearts are filled with Him, and what He has done and is doing for us, His character and spirit will guide our thoughts and ways, and give current to the kind of spirit we are of, suited to the place we are in and the time in which we live. Then let us not forget that this is a day of grace and mercy in which the blessed Lord is full of long-suffering and forgiveness, a day in which He is bearing with the wicked, and in which we need much to be considering Him, lest we "grow weary and faint in our minds;" lest we allow our natural, old Adam inclinations to break forth and dishonor the name we have believed in and are gathered to. The Jew may cry for vengeance upon those who afflict him in the time of Jacob's trouble, under the reign of the anti-Christ, but it is the cry of forgiveness that should characterize the Christian now. And here we would remark that priestly intercession is the true place of every believer before God, if in full communion with the Father and the Son. Christ is our High Priest *now* to intercede for His tried ones on earth; He is our Intercessor to present our petitions to the Father, and our Advocate if we commit sin, and it is in con-

fession to Him we are to go, that our souls may be restored and brought back into communion if it is broken, and this serves to keep the heart fresh and in intimate fellowship with Himself about the things of God in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Spirit. What a wondrous place we are in, Christian reader! A place of peculiar nearness with our blessed Lord, where we need no "middle men" as priests after the Jewish pattern, to come between our souls and our Father, or our risen Lord and Head. We are a "royal priesthood, an holy nation, (may we be more so) a peculiar people to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darknesss into light." "Also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I. Peter, ii, 5-9. By keeping this thought uppermost in our minds as to our position we will be preserved from the cunning priest-craft of men who "lie in wait to deceive." The tendency of man is to try to subject his fellow man to his dominant rule, and in no way is he more successful than through the avenues of priestcraft and religious superstition. Hence the importance of Christians understanding the true character of their calling, and walking along in it through the power of the Spirit of the Lord, which is liberty. The importance of each individual believer studying the Scriptures for him or herself will here become apparent. "The Bereans were more noble than they of Thessalonica in that they searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so."

So it is that God honors the diligent soul with light and knowledge as well as comfort, who delights in the study of His Word. In God's school the believer must learn, if he would be fitted for the service of the Master. God's standard and man's standard differ widely for true ministerial usefulness in the work of saving and edifying souls. Man would mystify the

truth of God by far-fetched efforts in material "knowledge which puffeth up," and detract from the simplicity that is in Christ by using human education to interpret God's Word. "God is his own interpreter and He will make it plain" to the patient trusting heart that looks meditatively into the Word and waits for the Holy Ghost to take the things of God and show them to him. Instruction in the Scriptures fits Christians to edify one another and help one another on in the Christian race. May we be more desirous of learning God's mind from His own Word, that our hearts may be free and unfettered from the craft and devices of men who would make merchandise of us. The conversion of Saul, who consented to the death of Stephen, was the commencement of a career of ministerial usefulness truly peculiar and remarkable in the history of the church. No one has ever since filled the same sphere of usefulness or endured for the sake of Christ, a life of equal privation and self-denial. It is remarkable that Paul gets his instructions from the Lord Himself, as a result of being caught up in spirit to the third heaven. I Cor. xi, 23. II Cor. xii, 1-5.

The Lord is indwelling every one of His own children to instruct them by the Holy Ghost if they will but learn of Him. I. Cor., vi, 19. May we enter into it.

We may glance again with profit at the third opening of the heavens when John hears the voice saying, come up hither, &c. The Church has been caught up out of this scene and seated in Heaven, the day of grace is past, and now what is seen by John means judgment and righteous rule.

"And immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold a throne was set in Heaven and One sat on the throne. and He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone, &c., and out of the throne proceeded thunderings and lightnings and voices," &c. Rev. iv, 2-5

A throne is always connected with reigning power.

John sees the executive throne of God in preparation for dealing with wicked man upon the earth. Christ is now upon the Father's throne, (Rev. iii, 21) but after He comes to take His church up to Heaven, (I Thes. iv. 14-16) He will then take His own throne or ruling place and put His church upon it with Himself according to the promise to the overcomer in Laodicea, Rev. iii, 21. He grants to the faithful overcomer just what the Father has granted to Him, a place of ruling power and of unlimited blessing in glory. "Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne (or place of authority) even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." What a glorious incentive to persevere in the Christian course and work of the Lord. Not that to overcome depends upon works, but upon what Christ has accomplished and what He is for us by the way. We "*are kept* by the power of God, through faith unto salvation," unto the salvation of these bodies in which we now "groan, being burdened," and which groaning is consequent of our souls being *now saved* by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. What a rich field of meditation and comfort the blessed Word of God presents to the soul that has Christ for its portion and is walking in communion with Him. The "thunderings, lightnings and voices" which proceed out of the throne plainly bespeak its character as that of judgment. They are emblems of power ready for manifestation and execution. What follows this preparation for judgment, as seen by John, is the opening of the seals, sounding the trumpets, pouring out of the vials, &c., a three-fold of seven judgments, increasing in power and severity as wicked man withstands the power of God as manifested toward Him. The trumpets succeed the seals with greater severity, while the vials or bowls of God's wrath present still greater manifestation of His power in the execution of His judgments. These seal, trumpet and vial judg-

ments evidently fall upon the apostate Jews and Gentiles who, marshalled by the beast and false prophet, are gathered in the prophetic earth (or Palestine) to withstand the God of Heaven in the last or seventieth "week" of Daniel's prophecy. But man, under the wicked and rebellious energy of Satan, withstands the wrath of God until Christ comes forth as the Rider on the white horse, followed by the armies of Heaven (the church) to make a short work of judgment and destroy His enemies with the brightness of His coming.

This brings us to the fourth opening of the Heavens which is immediately before the commencement of millennial reign on earth. The church of God having been caught up *before* the execution of the seal, trumpet, and vial (or bowl) judgments, is seated in Heaven in perfect security, in full fellowship with God during the seventieth or judgment week, and at its close comes forth (as we have shown) to share in the overthrow of the beast and false prophet and their apostate followers. How solemn to consider God as acting in judgment! It is His "strange work" but Satan and wicked man have forced Him to deal in judgment. May we own His Christ now in a day of grace.

COMFORT IN THE SCRIPTURES.

How oft our tried hearts, while toiling here,
Need cheering by some genial flow of soul,
In vain we look for comfort from what man revere,
Then turn to what God gives to make us whole.

There is an "aching void" in every Christless heart,
Which the world with all its art can never fill;
But God, the needed panacea doth impart,
Through His own Word, as His revealed will.

That Word first tells the soul its need of One,
Who gave Himself a sacrifice to die,
That sinful man might cease sin's course to run,
And reap a blessing, by the blood brought nigh.

That Word begets desires for Heavenly things,
 And "sets the affections upon things above ;"
 "Things new and old " from out the heart it brings,
 And shows the wondrous workings of a Father's love.

With such a vast range of nourishing soul supply,
 Can we grow weary or faint by the way?
 Not if we use what God would have us try,
 The power of His truth from day to day.

May we not grow weary in well doing now,
 In due season we shall reap a rich reward,
 But to our Father's will, in obedience bow,
 And He will love His children with a kind regard.

And when He's done with us in man's weary day,
 And served His righteous will with us down here,
 He'll call to Heavenly mansions far away,
 To be with the blessed Lord to us so dear.

Skead's Mills, Feb. 15th, 1880.

ELECTION.

As there has been from time to time much said on the doctrine of election, it may be well to briefly consider the question in the light of God's Word. God's elect or God's chosen are manifest in a double aspect, viz: first as a nation chosen *from* the foundation of the world, and this choice refers to Israel. Secondly, as the church chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Israel was chosen after the worlds were formed, and the promises to the Jews are of an earthly character connected with temporal blessings under a Heavenly sceptre. As a nation, Israel was chosen by promise to Abraham, (Gen. xii, 2) and as a nation they were manifested when delivered out of Egypt, as Moses sang on the wilderness side of the Red Sea, (Exodus xv, 120.) According to promise they were brought into the land which God told Abraham he would possess, (Gen. xii, 1-7), and crossed the Jordan dry shod in the same

manner as they passed through the Red Sea, Joshua iii, 14-17. As a nation they were established in the land and ruled by judges and kings, until they were unable longer to stand as a nation with rulers from among their own number, for they had turned their back upon God through pride and idolatry. When their iniquity could no longer be borne, God allowed them to be carried captive among the nations, and when according to His counsels the Messiah should come, two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) were allowed to return from captivity to rebuild the city and temple to prepare for the advent of Christ. He came unto his own (nation) and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on His name, St. John i, 11, 12. A remnant did receive Him, and when He taught them about what is coming upon the nation of Israel in the last days, He speaks of the elect, (Mat. xxiv, 24,) and this is the elect in Israel still who will be true to His name during the last or 70th week spoken of in Daniel's prophecy, (see Dan. ix, 24-27,) and who will witness all that craft and deceitfulness practiced by the man of sin spoken of in 11 Thess. 2, 7-11. Please refer to the above quotations dear reader and get their connections and you will see that they all refer to God's dealings with Israel as His elect *nation*. But now we come to consider, secondly, the elect of God in another aspect; viz: the church which is His body. After the Lord was rejected, crucified and rose again, He promised the Holy Ghost, (Luke xxiv, 49,) who came down at Pentecost, (Acts ii, 5,) and then begins the election of the church by preaching Christ, and "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," the Lord "adding to the church daily such as should be saved," Acts ii, 47. After Paul is raised up as a special minister to the Gentiles, he speaks of the church in his epistles as the mystery "which in other ages was not

made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel," Eph. iii, 5, 6. "According as he hath chosen us in him (Christ) *before* the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will," chap. i, 4, 5. Now dear Christian reader, here are plain declarations of scripture, descriptive of the church and the individual Christian in this present dispensation or interval through which we are now passing. You may be taught by systematic theology in such a way as to blind your eyes to the real import of these scriptures as blessed revelations of God's will and purposes, but if so it is your own loss, for God does all things well. There is no theme in all the range of God's ways as revealed to man that strengthens the soul and delivers from earth more than the contemplation of the election of the church in Christ before the worlds were created. It is a privilege indeed to go by the aid of the Holy Ghost back into the counsels of God, and there scan the wondrous thought of having a people who would constitute the church (or assembly) as the body with Christ as the Head, and to consider their character and place as a *Heavenly* people, to be manifested when they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and confess Him with the mouth, typified by Israel as they were manifested as a nation when delivered from Egypt.

We will refer to a few scriptures which together with those we have quoted substantially prove what we have stated.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

"For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

"Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified," Rom viii, 28-31.

What is the meaning of these scriptures if they do not prove election?

Again, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. i, 1, 2.

And, "Paul a servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of *God's elect*, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, *promised before the world began, &c.*," Titus i, 1, 2.

When Paul came to Corinth he was told by the Lord in a vision "be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace for I am with thee and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, *for I have much people in this city.* And he continued there a year and six months teaching the word of God among them," Acts xviii, 9-12. Here is a plain declaration that God had much people in Corinth, yet to be manifested as His elect or chosen ones in His purpose before the foundation of the world. Paul's preaching was the means of bringing them out, as they believed the gospel of Christ.

Again, Paul in a vision saw a man of Macedonia praying and saying, "come over into Macedonia and help us," Acts xvi, 9. This man of Macedonia proved to be the Philippian jailor, the one who cried "what must I do to be saved?" v. 30. Was not this a fine but clear illustration of the doctrine of election? Some may denounce this as Calvinism, but it is not, it is God's own truth. Thank God that Calvin brought out and taught it, after it had lain hidden for centu-

ries under the *debris* of Romish superstition and error, and it behooves Christians now to stand and defend the wholesome, soul-nourishing truths of God's Word, lest they be set aside and lost under the fleshly theology of the present day, that would compromise with the natural man by giving him something to *do* in his own strength, for the sake of gaining his patronage and support in material things. Soul-searching truth is not popular, and never will be, and it is only in communion with God, with the unhindered aid of the Holy Spirit that the doctrine of election can be fully understood. And now let me say reader, instead of resisting or cavilling at God's Word, and debating with your fellow Christians about election or any other doctrine so plain and apparent as it, ask God to give you the spirit of obedience to His Word, and you will be both comforted and edified.

GIDEON AND HIS ARMY IN THEIR TYPICAL CHARACTER.

(Judges vi and vii).

"And there came an angel of the Lord and sat under an oak which was in Ophra, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite ; and his son Gideon thrashed wheat by the wine press to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, *the Lord is with thee* thou mighty man of valor," chap. vi, 11, 12.

Israel had sinned and the Lord allowed the Midianites to over-run the land and drive the Israelites into the mountains. The Midianites came up and consumed the fruits of the land as grass hoppers, and Gideon wishing to save something to eat thrashed his wheat near where he could hide it. But God had purposed to deliver Israel, and had chosen Gideon as His instrument to that end. But poor Gideon pleads his own poverty thus, "O my Lord wherewith shall I

save Israel? behold my family is poor in Manasseh and *I am the least* in my father's house." He craves a sign and the angel grants it, the present which Gideon brings, of a kid, unleavened cakes and broth, is consumed before his eyes and the angel vanishes. And what does Gideon do next? Important to consider O my soul. He built at God's command an altar unto the Lord! And where does he obtain his material? The stones, he obtained from the altar of Baal that he had thrown down, and the wood from the grove of Baal by it that he had hewn down. This is to us a fruitful theme for meditation. Where offerings had been made to a false god by Gideon's father, Gideon now builds an altar in faithfulness and offers to the true God. "Where sin abounded grace now much more abounds," in a sense at least. As soon as faithfulness comes in God gains a victory through His chosen instrument. Gideon blows a trumpet to gather his forces, and asks the Lord to confirm his calling by two signs more. The fleece of wool is put upon the ground wet with dew while the ground is left dry at Gideon's request, and again the fleece is left dry while the ground is dampened. Here again is God's faithfulness to His chosen instrument, and thus teaches Gideon of his mission as well as faithfulness in it. Thirty-two thousand answer the trumpet call, but God tells Gideon that the host is too large for Him to work with, and He puts it to two severe tests which reduces it to *three hundred men*! With these Gideon is to put the host of the Midianites to flight, which lay along the valley as the stars of the sky for multitude. What a glorious triumph is here in prospect! Yet that is just the way God works. So unlike man who trusts in an arm of flesh, God delights in doing great things with small instruments. What was David's sling beside Saul's armour in the sight of man. Nothing. Yet David's faith saw the victory with the sling and he put off Saul's armour (man's estimation) because *he had*

not proved it as he had his little sling ! How beautiful ! What a rich theme for the heart to dwell upon to exalt God and set aside man. But Gideon must needs be brought down to the camp of the enemy to be confirmed in his calling. He must be tested, and God gives him encouragement even from the mouth of the enemy. What a rich type of Christ's acknowledged position even from His enemies. As Pilate said "what I have written I have written," concerning the acknowledgment of His Messiahship and again the centurion, "truly this man was the Son of God." Gideon hears from the interpretation of the dream of the Midianite that he is the barley cake that is to fall into the camp and scatter the Midianites, Judges vii, 14. How wonderful God works to carry out His purposes. Christ the true Barley Cake, here typified by Gideon, will yet fall into the camp of the followers of the beast and false prophet, representing the world and apostate christendom, and overturn and smite them to the dust. Gideon brings down his faithful three hundred and posts them on three sides of the camp of the Midianites, one hundred on a side, armed with trumpets, lamps and pitchers. Singular weapons indeed with which to rout and put to flight a numerous host. Every man at the command of the leader is to break his pitcher that his light may shine forth, and blow his trumpet and shout, "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon," v. 20. This singular tactics so moved the hearts of the Midianites with fear and confusion that they fled and began to cut each other down in their panic, so that Gideon and his followers gained a complete victory. The followers of Christ the true Gideon are called out to let their light shine forth, and to do this they must crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts that the Spirit may teach and lead them, that Christ may use them "to fight the good fight of faith, in putting to flight the hosts of sin and error. The weapons of the Christian's warfare "are

not carnal but mighty in the Lord to the pulling down of strongholds." How beautiful are they typified in the trumpets, pitchers and lamps of Gideon's men! God can use a few shafts of truth, hurled by one of His weak ones, to the overthrow of a huge camp of satanic opposition, and how encouraging this thought is to the weakest believer in Christ. The sword of the Spirit which is the word of God is in the hands of the simplest, and its telling thrusts the enemy cannot withstand. "It is written," settles the question at once. God's word which was "forever settled in Heaven" stands fast, while the lies of Satan, in the form of infidel writing, false doctrines under the head of Universalism, Unitarianism, Spiritualism, Progressive Societies, and Freethinking Clubs, will all melt away as dew before the sun, and flee from before the true Gideon and His army.

Birchtown, Dec. 13th 1879.

THE BEACON LIGHT.

A Beacon bright, shines out o'er life's rough sea,
 Its cheering rays the mariner to guide
 Through surging waves and icebergs, back to Thee
 O God of love, who doth all things provide.

It shines for all, no one exempt who will
 Receive its tendered light through pure grace;
 It sheds a warmth the aching void to fill,
 In every weary heart on life's dull race.

Poor traveller o'er the desert waste, look up,
 Thou needst not want a light to guide thy way,
 Thou needst not hunger while thou mayest sup,
 With Him who'll turn the darkest night to day.

Why go with bowed head, and spirit torn
 With anguish, while a Saviour's placid eye
 Beams forth a rest to thee by life's toil worn,
 He'll give a buoyant step and heart without a sigh.

Then onward press, the goal and prize to gain,
 'Tis but a "little while" to toil here below,

The journey, now so fraught with toil and pain,
Will end where shines that light in fullest radiance now.

Allow His beams to draw thy heart to Him,
Above earth's clogging weights of carping care,
And though now through the gloom thou seest dim,
Yet thou mayst soon His Heavenly glory share.

TEACHING THE ANGELS.

"Neither was the man created or the woman, but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels," 1 Cor. ii, 9, 10. The marginal reading of the last verse of the above scripture runs thus, "the woman ought to have a covering as a sign that she is under the power of her husband." "Power on her head" means power vested in her husband to rule, as her husband is her *head*, as Christ is the head of the man and God the head of Christ, v. 3. As the angels are learning "in the church the manifold wisdom of God, which things they desired to look into," (1 Peter, 1-12,) how important that God's order in the church be observed, that the angels may learn a correct lesson from the walk and conversation of Christians. Many a check would we meet in our conduct if we but for a moment paused to remember that angels were learning lessons from us. To realize that we are put into a position of such wondrous responsibility, is indeed overwhelming as well as humbling in view of the barren way we answer to this responsibility. If all dutiful and obedient women to the Lord could enter into the fact that by being "obedient to their own husbands," and by cultivating "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," they thus honored the Lord and preserved His order by teaching the angels His manifold wisdom, would there not be a greater contrast presented to the bold, saucy

strong-mindedness which is forward to advocate woman's rights these days?

LETTER,

On the development and growth of spiritual perception.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," St. John iii, 6. Flesh and spirit are here shown by our blessed Lord as having a special character as the result of birth or origin, and producing fruit in accordance with that origin. "A tree is known by its fruits," and when we see an individual bringing forth the fruits of the flesh as the result of his life, we conclude that he has a fleshly mind, that he has had no spiritual birth and is incapable of bringing forth the fruits of the spirit. But when we see the same person broken down under the power of the preached word, or brought by the power of the Holy Ghost into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ, and find him engaged in spiritual things, we conclude that he has been born again of the Spirit, and in the power of a new life capable of bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. There can be no real spiritual fruit from the carnal mind, for it is enmity against God and understands not the things which pertain to the Spirit of God, hence a spiritual birth is necessary to form the basis upon which to build a spiritual character. We cannot put the new wine of the Spirit into the old bottles of the carnal mind, neither can we patch up the old condemned Adam nature with the new cloth of spiritual life. There must be a new life brought in with Christ as its spring and nourishment, or every effort to bring forth fruit unto God will prove a failure. The carnal mind may devise many schemes of human improvement, may try in its own ingenuity to present many evasions of God's solemn sentence upon the flesh, but all to no avail. Before the flood God said, "the end of all flesh has come before me," and when He gave the promises to

Abraham, He brought in circumcision as a seal or sign of His condemnation of it. When grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, He gave baptism as a sign of the burial of the flesh out of sight. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ." How this does wither to naught the fanciful inventions of carnal ingenuity, as they present their pleas of natural goodness! God will claim the authorship of all He accepts, and is willing to reward His children for working out with fear and trembling that salvation which He works within to will and to do of His good pleasure. Wondrous thought that we are thus used as light bearers in a world of darkness, with Heavenly reward for faithfulness down here. What gives us spiritual discernment in any matter is dwelling much in the Lord's presence and thus thinking His thoughts and using His judgment about everything with which we come in contact. Living in obedience to His Word is also a prolific source of spiritual discernment. "If any man keep my commandments, he shall know the doctrine" is a promise which much encourages the obedient soul in service for his Master. When the conscience is clear before God and man, there exists unbroken communion with God and a clear perception as to the real character of all that comes before the believer. The Holy Ghost ungrieved in such a heart has full power to take the things of God and show them to the believer, and to comfort him under any trial through which he may be called to pass. How simple and free, yet on what secure ground is that soul which takes sides with God and stands for Him through all circumstances, leaving the consequences with God. He is able to judge correctly in all things for "the spiritual man judgeth all things though he himself is judged of no man." Freedom from the ambitious anxieties of a Christless world, at leisure from self, and with a will fully subjected to God's will, only desiring with a single eye to glorify

Him, the child of God goes on the journey growing "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," and "brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." With the Holy Spirit as earnest of the inheritance dwelling in him, he is fitted to labor on in the fullest intelligence of his position and thankful amid all the shifting scenes of the journey down here. Who of us as Christians would not reject the tempting efforts of a perishing world, that we might be at liberty to serve such a gracious loving Master. May we enter into our privileges fully and live up to the rich income flowing out to us from our risen Head in the glory. May our hearts be untrammelled from every carnal weight and the liberty in which we are made free be unchecked and unhindered by any legal time, service or sluggishness of soul. Amen.

LIFE'S RAILWAY.

Hark ! the train is coming, rumbling
 O'er life's railway to its goal ;
 Freightied with young hearts, that ever
 Yearn for food to fill the soul.

Out they look for word and action,
 For example's pattern true ;
 Shall their waiting spirits, vainly
 Call for such, from, reader, you ?

Clear the track ! let habit's rubbish,
 Hinder not their passage, through
 This vale of sorrow, where dear reader,
 Light should shine for them from you.

Put away your pipe and cigar ;
 Hindrances are they on the track ;
 They but help to throw the train off ;
 Help to keep the young heart back.

Break the wine-glass and the snuff-box ;
 Speak the word of caution then ;
 These young souls upon life's journey,
Soon will take their place as men.

Let your life shine forth with virtue,
 Its golden beams in turn may find,
 Through the young train so close behind you,
 The coming train that's *far* behind.

Speak to them of Jesus often ;
 Let His life shine forth in you ;
 A rich reward awaits you up yonder,
 If but to Him, you here prove true.

Parents, guardians friends and teachers,
 You conductors on life's train,
 Acquit yourselves in duty nobly ;
 Your children, endless life may gain.

ON THE POWER OF EVIL HABITS.

Evil habits, like popular pastimes, are instruments of Satan to pollute souls. Unregenerate people are apt to become creatures of bad habit, as not having the Holy Spirit to check their natural propensities, their time must be occupied in *some* way as the soul is active and will be employed in either the service of the evil one or of the Lord. The natural man in youth courts some practise with which to consume the time and occupy the mind, and though good influences, through pious training, may do much to check the *tendency* to evil habits, yet there is no safety from a downward tendency but through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. We may in an unregenerate state prune off many practices from the tree of our daily life by rules of moral walk, but the *root* yet remains in our nature, and will shoot up, fresh scions to mar our existence and aid in dragging us down to endless death. Nothing but the grace of God can *effectually* remove our *desires* for sinful practices, when once they get a hold upon us, and where the desire exists the sin will likely be manifest. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The habits of using tobacco and ardent spirits. are by many not thought sinful, but we ask if a practice which robs you of your money and gives in return

disease of body and destruction of soul, is not sinful? Surely you will admit that they take your money and injure your health, and if they cloud your mind and increase sensuality, do they not jeopardize your soul before you have embraced Christ. Even after you have the new birth, and indulge in sinful habits, you belie your profession and prove that you are yet willing in the flesh to serve Satan although your heart would revolt at the thought of doing evil. So powerful is the force of evil habits, that the heart previously affected, sometimes yearns and longs for their indulgence, even after they are thought to be subdued. Any habit that places a chain upon us, and demands our time and attention *unnecessarily*, and results in injury, *is sinful*. There is the *example* that results as a necessary consequence from our sinful indulgence. Suppose you are a school boy, see papa smoke, chew or drink grog, and you imitate him, is not his example sin when it leads you astray, and if you in turn induce others to do the same by *your* example, are you not committing a sin? What is your duty with reference to indulging in these practices and habits which leave a stain upon your character both in practice and example. If you have the filthy habits of chewing tobacco or taking snuff once fastened upon you, you will find it exceedingly hard to get rid of them. That of using ardent spirits or opium is perhaps more acute and immediately destructive, but less binding, because of the *apparent* harmlessness of the former. And when we reprove some people for these practices they say, "So and so is a good Christian, he smokes, chews, or drinks grog, as the case may be, and I can do the same without fear." So my dear Christian reader, your example, *because you are a Christian*, becomes a stumbling block to those that are weak, from the fact that you are not supposed to do any thing wrong, yet will persist in the indulgence of filthy habits. Paul was not only willing to preach Christ

and him crucified, but to abstain from anything which would "cause his weak brother to offend." Will you continue to say "it is no body's business how much I smoke, chew or drink," when the example you set is the cause of stumbling to others? The weak-minded youth who is decoyed into the grog shop for the first time, through your example, or puts a pipe in his mouth because you do, will look upon you as the instrument in the hands of Satan for leading him astray, when he is convinced of the evil of his course. Can you allow yourself to become callous-hearted and regardless of the welfare of others, because of your determination, at all hazards, to satisfy your own vitiated appetite? If you are a Christian it is your duty to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts," not only for the benefit of you own soul, but for those of others. "No man liveth for himself alone," and unless you flee away to the rocks and mountains and burrow in the caves of the earth, you *will* exert an influence, much as you may wish to remain secluded. God has created each soul to *shine*, in some sphere be it ever so humble, and if you are saved through the blood of Christ, He expects you to redeem the time in His service in some way. It is hard work to be faithful to God when Satan is allowed to throw his weights of sinful habits upon our spirits. Let us consider this in a conscientious light. Can *you* my youthful reader allow yourself to become a *slave* to a habit which, while it becomes more fixed upon you, is sapping your purse and health, stultifying your sensibilities, and rendering callous those heartfelt qualities which receive the offers of wholesome instruction? What a sad sight is that young man who is daily seen reeling under the influence of the intoxicating draught, or his fine features puffed and blackend with tobacco. Think of it for a moment? When to realize that Satan is *gradually* whirling him around the outer circle of a Maelstrom whose centre is the pit of

destruction, for while he is exhausting his purse and health by evil habits, he is becoming more regardless of the opinion of others towards him, and willing to be classed with those who "care not what people say of them." Do you my youthful reader not realize the danger of allowing yourself to fall into evil habits? We have not mentioned the long catalogue of evils which daily swallow up their thousands of victims in the great cities, but warn you against the most common or, into which you will be most likely to fall. Be watchful! There only is safety in steeling your heart against the least approach of sinful indulgence. Look to God through Christ for power to resist temptation, for if you trust in your own strength you will doubtless fail. "Be *sober*, be vigilant, for you adversary the devil, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."

THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER.

(Read St. John, x, 27-29,)

The Shepherd gave His life for the sheep,
The Spirit baptises in One;
The Father, His children doth keep,
As proof of a work once well done.

The voice of the Shepherd they hear,
And follow as kept by His care.;
His presence they feel ever near;
Their trials He delighteth to share.

No power can pluck from his hand,
The members so dear to Himself;
Secure in the Spirit they stand,
Though tempted by Satan or elf.

How cheering to know this great truth,
While travelling through this desert waste,
It fills with the freshness of youth,
The soul that its comfort doth taste.

May doubts and fears never deter,
Our hearts from accepting the Word,
As plainly we read and revere
What's spoken by our blessed Lord.

ON THE NECESSITY OF HIGHLY PRIZING SPIRITUAL THINGS.

Dear Reader :—You will perceive by reading Heb., ii, 1, that there is a danger of loosing the instruction we may from time to time receive. “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip ;” *or let them run out*, as from leaky vessels. The great tendency of the Christian to cleave to earthly things and to forget the spiritual, calls out the above caution from the Apostle. He has an anxiety for the welfare of all to whom he addresses letters of instruction and warning, and knowing the danger they were in, is extremely desirous that his instructions may not be thrown away upon them. Satan is ever busy to occupy the heart, that it may be kept from Christ, for in proportion as he can draw away the affections of the believer and cause them to rest upon things on the earth, so will he be able to keep him from the service of the Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil, are the three potent enemies that the Christian has to contend with and these will fill his mind with so much against his soul’s welfare, that it is hard for him to bear in mind the instruction which he has from time to time received. Watchfulness is necessary to keep him in the way he should walk, that his mind be not taken up by the perishing things of time and sense. We may even fill the mind by many things which are highly praised by learned men to the exclusion of the blessed instructions which fortify the heart of the Christian. Often an excellent education creates pride of heart and pedantry, if offered without urging the necessity of a new birth. “Ye must be born again,” is the most valuable injunction which can be urged upon the unregenerate, and if the heart is puffed up with self-love by an expensive education without conversion, the danger is great that the education may be a means of hindering the salvation

of the soul. A *reliance* upon education *after* the new birth, may have much to do with keeping from the heart those blessed instructions which have proven so valuable to the Christian walk. "Not many noble, not many learned shall enter the kingdom of Heaven," and this is because the heart is uplifted and too proud to receive the simple truths of the Word. A celebrated author says, "A person may be poor, ignorant, mean, and of small capacity, yet if guided by the counsel of God, this poor, unlettered man shall be esteemed by his Maker as wise and of good understanding; another man may be great and noble, skilful in all knowledge, able to discourse in many languages, and the world may be astonished at his talents, yet because he knows not true piety, God would pronounce him a fool, a man of no understanding." So lightly are all our acquired advantages viewed in the sight of God. As the Christian becomes absorbed with that which leads him away from Christ he will have a tendency to dislike instruction in Christ, or retain that which he has received. It is impossible to serve God and mammon at the same time, and if your thoughts are running to the ends of the earth after the perishing things of time and sense, your soul is surely not in communion with God. You are commanded to set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth, and would this command have been given had it not been necessary? Our true condition of heart cannot be revealed without the aid of the Holy Spirit, and when His searching power comes in upon our weak and unstable hearts we realize the necessity of giving up to be led by Him, and to trust in His power to work within us, to will and to do according to the good pleasure of the Father. Look around at the multitude of carnal attractions which present themselves to your notice to draw your affections after them and away from God. Very many Christians crowd in but a part of the first day of

the week in the service of God, and this in a hurried manner as though their service was more of a duty than a pleasure. Instead of devoting each day to the service of God as they ought, (for the Christian's Sabbath should be *every day*), their thoughts are found running out after their worldly affairs even while professing to worship God in the sanctuary. Contrast the peculiar walk of Christians in apostolic times, with the worldly aspirations and social distinctions of the present day ! How much sympathy is there in the breast of that purse-proud professor, for the poor brother he just passed on the sidewalk without scarcely recognizing him, instead of stopping to enquire into his affairs, or how his soul prospers. Does he not show that he has "let slip" all the regard for the poor member of the body of Christ which he ever possessed? Surely he has proven a leaky vessel to lose *love*, with all his religious profession, he is as but as "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal." Paul often enjoins watchfulness "lest ye fall into temptation," "lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and many be defiled," and declares that "now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord." All these cautions imply a danger of falling into sin, and the condemnation of God. For all this, it is impossible for the Christian to fall *entirely* away. When once the Holy Ghost baptizes the believer into the body of Christ, which is the case at every true conversion, that the soul has *eternal* life abiding in him, and if he has *eternal* life he has a life that cannot be cut short by any device of the wicked one. Yet if the believer falls into sin, the Holy Ghost will rouse his conscience and punish him with many warnings, that he may be constrained to turn again to the Bishop and Shepherd of his soul, and seek favor at the hands of Him who alone can successfully plead his cause with the Father. Reader, heed the warning of the text. Show yourself a vessel that can hold the blessed instruction which you may from time to time

receive. The Lord will reward you in proportion as you live faithful.

TRIUNE TESTIMONY AGAINST NATURAL GOODNESS.

The following is the closing article of a short correspondence, the author of this work held with a member of the "Progressive Society," which meets in Ottawa weekly, to advance views opposed to the truths of the Bible. This article is inserted here to present in brief the triune evidence of God to the nothingness of natural excellence of man in God's estimate :

To the Editor of the Free Press,

SIR,—Your patience is again taxed with a few thoughts, not so much by way of a reply to the labor-ed article in yesterday's Free Press, in which my "theology" as the writer terms it, is sarcastically referred to, but to present a few contrasts between truth and error. More than ever is the need manifested that Christians should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, and strive to put forth the truth simply, both to convince the gainsayers and to stir up each others minds by way of remembrance of the inestimable value of the common salvation which was brought out in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. I will merely pause to notice two or three points in the effusion above referred to, and then present the contrasts. The fine progressive human nature which he lauds so highly, was defined by God the Father, before the flood thus ; "and God said unto Noah, (mark Mr. Ed., God said it,) the end of all flesh is come before me for the earth is filled with violence through them," &c. Gen vi, 13. That was God's estimate of the Adam nature, and of just what every unconverted man is long ago, and there has been no change in the character of that nature since. There

is nothing new under the sun, and under the sun is nature's place. When God the Son was on the earth He spoke of the same human Adam nature thus, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," St. John iii, 6. Again, God the Holy Ghost writing through Paul to the Romans, says of the natural man, "for we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, (and here you have the fine honeyed talk of the Progressionist as of other plausible false doctrines), whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood, (Jacobins, Communists, Painites, &c.) Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known; (and to sum up the whole) there is no fear of God before their eyes," Rom. iii, 9-18. What a solemn, undeniable record this is of the natural man! Presented too, by the Triune God, a record that all the craft of Satan, working out through cunning crafty men cannot overthrow. We might labor through columns of human logic and not clear up the point anything like as fully as this simple scripture does. We appeal to all who in any degree love the truth as it is in Christ, whether this point is not fully met. As to my "theology" (Paul calls it "my gospel") it was of old a "stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks," or Gentiles, (1 Cor. 1-23;) and our progressive writer must be one or the other, for it is plain from his production that he is not a Christian. As to those who preach this gospel, or good news of deliverance in Christ, the cry is the same as of yore respecting

them. "These people that turn the world upside down have come hither also." And why do they turn the world upside down? Because the truth they preach upsets all the fine-spun theories which worldly men like spiders, spin to catch the silly flies of puffed up human nature, who are willing to be duped by their "good words and fair speeches which deceive the hearts of the simple." The reason why Progressionists, Infidels and false theologians, do not accept the good news of a crucified and risen Christ, and their individual need of Him, is because the natural man 'receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned,' 1 Cor. ii, 14. What then is he to do? Let him become a fool that he may be made wise in the things of God by accepting a crucified Christ as his needed sacrifice and substitute. When once he owns his need of Christ as a Saviour, by taking his place as a lost sinner and owning the sacrifice, God's lamb which He has provided in His great love for sinful man, it is then and then only he can begin to learn the mind of God, and appreciate the value of that word in which His mind is revealed. Truth and error are opposite, and are constantly working to produce contrary effects. Truth, as it is in Christ, delivers from bondage, purifies and elevates man into communion with God, and restores to man in Christ far more than Adam lost by disobedience in Eden. Error plunges its devotees into spiritual bondage, keeps their minds occupied with vague inventions and materialistic theories, which afford no promise of deliverance from slavish grovelling currents of thought, and present nothing for the poor tired sin-laden heart but the barren husks of the "far country." Truth presents a promise of "an inheritance incorruptable, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven" for those who accept the One who came as the embodiment of grace and

truth, and who alone could atone for sin, for no created being could endure as the sacrifice, so deep in moral degradation was man sunk in the sight of God under the power of sin. It is the question of sin that puzzles all the clever advocates of error and human exaltation. And why? Because Satan, "the God of this world hath blinded their eyes" to its true character, and of their own position as sunk in its miry depths. Salvation from sin comes in as an accepted result of what Christ has wrought out for those who are willing to own what He has done and the value of His work for them. It comes "not of works lest any man should boast." God will not be brought in debtor for anything the flesh can do. He will have "no flesh glory in His presence" notwithstanding all the finely painted progressive Darwin-like theories extant. God is Light as well as Love, and they who have the love of God shed abroad in the heart, "walk in the light as He is in the light," and have no confidence in the flesh, nor in any of its fine progressive pleas. Error is darkness and bondage, because it leads away from God, but "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty" and that too for every one who owns Christ and is willing to "walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh." We have repeated this thought that it may be fully presented as the starting point for all true effort in the sight of God, and we do feel deeply the need of holding fast the faithful word, for it is plain to be seen that the advocates of error would sweep away every land-mark of truth by denying God's word, and reduce every principle of faith to spiritual anarchy and confusion. The letter in yesterday's Free Press plainly shows this, and it is meet that Christians bestir themselves to oppose such cunning devices of error and its advocates.

Ottawa, June 9th, 1880.

WAITING.

The hours go fleeting by,
 The time soon hastens on,
 When weary ones now tarrying here
 Will with their Lord be gone.

The midnight hour is past,
 The day-dawn soon will break ;
 The watchmen with their Lord will rise
 Their Heavenward flight will take.

Here in this scene they toil,
 And groan with burdened heart,
 But suffer on with hope's bright prize
 In view, till they hence depart.

How sweet the promise sure,
 No stronger here they need,
 Than that He's coming down HIMSELF
 To take them up indeed.

What can so cheer their hearts,
 So comfort by the way ;
 And keep them waiting for Him here,
 As remembering this alway.

THE POSITION OF THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST.

Dear R—— :—To aid you in your Christian pilgrimage I propose to offer a few hints on the position of the believer in Christ, that you may understand something of what is in store for you as a child of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ. The signs of your conversion are, you “know that you have sprung from death unto life because you love the brethren.” “The Spirit of God bears witness with your spirit that you are a child of God.” You realize the abiding presence of the Comforter in your heart to guide, direct and comfort you in your journey, to present a sense of duty before you, to encourage you when faint by the way, and to enlarge your heart and

understanding in the things of God. The things you once delighted in you now despise, and the things that you formerly made light of and thought of little consequence, you now rejoice over and delight to participate in. Your whole course of thought is turned from what it was, and you lead a new life in the Lord instead of delighting in the service of the wicked one. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened you know what is the hope of the calling of God the Father, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in the world to come, and hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the head over all things to which the church which is His body the fullness of Him that filleth all in all," (Ephesians 18-23. These truths and much more you realize as precious to your soul, and delight in the blessed comforts of scriptural communication, not only with your fellow Christians, but with God the Father. The believer is made the righteousness of God through Christ, and the exalted position which he occupies in Christ carries him into a sacred nearness to the Father through the pleadings of Christ his living Head. This blessed thought, instead of "exalting above measure," tends to humble him into the dust to think that God should condescend to do so much for him. He realizes that although he was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, yet God has condescended to place him in a position to "judge angels" with his living Head the Lord Jesus, and constitute him a member of that blessed company who will come in bright array to judge the wicked quick, and overthrow the beast and the *false prophet*,

and bind Satan in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, Rev. xix, 14-21, and xx, 1, 2, 3. The believer is buffeted and beat about while in the body, realizing that on earth "he has no continuing city but seeks one to come." He is not in fellowship with the world, for the world is sinful, and his daily walk and conversation are a standing rebuke to its wiles and deceit, and although he may engage in the business of life, he does so that he may provide for his own and use the world as not abusing it. His associations are of that character which sustain and propagate good influences, and witness before mankind that the Lord has dealt mercifully with him. He is willing to be "instant in season and out season," doing the will of the Father at every opportunity which may present itself. He looks into the Word of God with a prayerful desire to learn the will of the Father and trust in the Holy Spirit to make plain its blessed truths, that he may grow up into Christ his living Head in all things, and become a man in Christ capable of feeding upon the *strong meat* of the Word instead of the *milk*, as when he had first believed. He realize the necessity of looking continually for the coming of the Lord Jesus, that his affections may "be set upon things above and not on things on the earth." He grasps with avidity every principle or truth that may serve to strengthen his faith and confirm his hope of "being caught up to meet the Lord in the air when He shall descend from Heaven with a shout," to take up His bride, the Church, to be ever with Him. He rejoices in the glorious prospect of coming to "reign with Christ a thousand years," over the Jews through the millennium. He knows that he is *dead, buried and risen with Christ*, he is on the resurrection side of the grave, and can say in triumph "O death where is thy sting, grave thy boasted victory?" Free from the raging sea of carnal strife and worldly contention, he seeks to walk continually in the ways of truth and soberness. Turning to the

Word of God he sees the Church in a state of judgment, in the first three chapters of Revelation. Christ is judging the Church, His bride, that she may not be judged and condemned with the world. He is reproofing what he sees amiss in her practice, and showing what He approves of, that her members who desire to walk in Him, may come out and purge themselves from the noxious weeds of disobedience and corruption which have found a place in Christendom. In the fourth chapter of Revelation the believer is seen seated with the Church in the 24-elder character around the throne of God. In the fifth chapter the Lion of the tribe of Judah is shown able to take the book from the hand of Him who sitteth on the throne and open the seals thereof, and at this announcement the Church (or 24 elders and angels,) fall down and worship the Lamb and exclaim, "Thou art worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," v. 9, 10. Here is evidence that the place of the church of God is that of worshippers around the throne of God in the character of the 24 elders, during the opening of the seals of judgment, the sounding of the trumpets, the pouring out of the vials of wrath, and the pronouncing of the woes during the last week of Daniel or the seven years of the judgment of the quick. At the close of the week, the believer, clothed in white, is seen coming forth in that white horse throng who *appear* as ten thousand saints with our Lord, whom every eye shall see, and who will stand with him on Mount Olivet when the Jews receive Him as their king. Believer, do you realize your position as a member of Christ's body? If so, happy are ye. Reader, if a sinner, (and you are such if you have not the new birth,) would you occupy the blessed place of a believer? Seek

Christ while he may be found. Open your heart to the reception of Him as your sacrifice and substitute that you may be saved. Amen.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

Women's rights! What are they? That she has rights and precious ones too, no one will dispute who has a proper estimate of the value of a right thing in the right place. But what are her rights? What saith the scripture, which is the best authority to which we can refer? Give honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, is the substance of the scriptural exhortation and if she is to have honor as the weaker vessel, how absurd it is for her to deprive herself of that honor by striving to take the place of man who is her lord and protector. The Bible is woman's best friend as it defines her position, and obliges man to love, honor and cherish her as a valued object of his care and protection. "But I suffer not a woman to teach or usurp authority over the man but to be in silence," 1 Timothy, ii, 12. Here again the scripture puts woman in her true place, and here she can shine as an ornament and help-mate for man. The true and happy sphere of women is the domestic circle where her power is felt and valued by every true hearted man. Here she can shed a beautiful benign influence truly to be valued and appreciated by every lover of the beautiful and good. How ungraceful and misplaced is a woman, going out into the concerns of men, and with forward air, and contentious mien, setting up her authority to wield influences entirely foreign to her calling. Equally so at home in defiance of her husbands authority, if she gets up a headstrong will to bring him under her subjection. It is practical infidelity, a standing evidence of evil, controlling the weaker vessel and energizing her to counteract the teachings and ministrations of God's Word. What

is more to be admired than a meek-spirited, modest, unassuming woman, engaged in the quiet duties of home, satisfied with the sphere in which she is placed, and striving to make all happy within the reach of her influence. On the contrary, what is more repulsive than a bold-faced feminine advocate of false woman's rights, figuring in public debates and through the press to vaunt into a position in which she could have nothing but unrest and unhappiness. Be satisfied dear women with the place the scripture puts you into, for there you will have not only the approval of every right hearted man, but the blessing of God will rest upon you.

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Dear C—— * * * One often needs a sympathizing heart to tell out ones trials to, even to a fellow traveller in a scene like this. To Jesus first we can go ; praise His name ! yet it is indeed precious to find a kindred heart in one who is now in the wilderness where difficulties will be met as they never will be when the Lord has us home with Himself. Home ! We lose our home here as soon as we own Him who had no home in the scene in which we are now journeying. How often the Lord allows the circumstances of the way to teach us where our home is ! How often He withdraws our earthly props that we may fall into His dear arms. How jealous He is of our love and dependence. How much He wants them ! And He will have them too though it be through our trials and buffetings. How often He brings us up to the point where we have nothing to say but "*the Lord knows ?*" Blessed refuge ! We cannot tell why it is, but just there He brings us to the "back side of the desert," away up out of the miserable lame refuge, this Egypt of carnality can afford us, just to reveal Himself in the burning bush of His own heart's love for

His own tried ones down here. How precious to be taking lessons (it may be for future service), in His school of experience as we go on the way. Just at the time we have looked around and thought we had found fellowship in our fellow pilgrims here in what we are doing for Him, He takes away all our props and says, "lean on *me*! Find in *ME* what you require! I am enough for all you lack!" Then we cease looking around and look up, where all is clear calm sunshine, where all is joy, where all is "enough the mind and heart to fill" and "to the hill from whence our help cometh." And then we learn to bear all things for His name's sake. We may not be understood, our heart yearnings may not be responded to by any heart but His own, yet we toil on knowing that He has us on His breast to plead for us in the presence of the Father. All this and more He will teach us, that we may rejoice with Him in the rejection which the spirit of the world has for us if faithful to Himself. Dear brother, may we learn more in His presence, His mind about all things. May we learn too even while we claim to take His own word as a guide to our conduct, the difference between dealing in a cold harsh legal spirit, and in the love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. *Legality never gathers to Christ, it always scatters.* How solemn the theme for our heart's meditation! We who have been set free by Christ Himself, to be entangled by *any* yoke of bondage. But

"Blest be the sorrow, kind the storm,
That drives us nearer home!"

May we be faithful in the path of rejection in which He has set us, and may our discernment of Himself in each other, not be eclipsed by any dealing (however righteous) that might hinder His love from manifesting itself through us. Now dear brother, may one crave your prayers and sympathy, as a member of the *same body* of which Christ is the Head? He knows

and feels all our lack and can make us feel each others lack, and He can supply all our need out of His own fulness. Will you ask Him to sustain, poor weak and unfaithful as one is? that we may, "love more the less we be loved." Oh for more of His dear patience to bear with each other, and to carry each other in the spirit of faithful Epaphras to a throne of grace. May the Lord bless you. Amen.
Mount Sherwood, June 14th, 1881.

SINCERITY OF PURPOSE.

The greatest earnest of success in life is the sincerity of purpose with which we enter upon what we have in hand to do. The motive is the principle that characterizes our efforts, and if our motives are good, and entered upon with a sincere desire to accomplish good, the means of accomplishment are very sure to come to hand in some form. The reason is, the One who prompts the motive has it in His power to turn circumstances to our favor, so that if we go on in our own efforts sincerely, there is little doubt of our success. The tide may for a time be discouragingly against us, but ultimately the victory is ours if we persevere. It matters little what line of life we may engage in, that has for its object the glory of God and the welfare of others, the character of the motive will soon be manifested and we gain a reward accordingly. But if we have impure motives and in a reckless careless spirit enter upon our labors, no matter what they may promise of accomplishing, they will be very apt to fail, because we cannot count upon a blessing from God who knows the motives of our hearts, if we are insincere and careless minded. If a selfish ambition or a covetous desire prompts our efforts we will be apt to run into a reckless desperate course which will in the end bring failure. Our safe course is to cast our lot in with God and work as He works within

us, and this will give us the tone of mind and character of purpose to be sincere in what we have in hand, and therefore insure his blessing and aid in our efforts, if done according to His word.

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR.

It is one of the characteristics of the present time, that labor is ignored and made little of by a large majority of the youth who come upon the stage of action to begin the race of life. Labor is considered as without dignity as not being respectable as beneath the calling of a gentlemen, &c., because there is a spirit of aspiration to the learned professions; or to some calling that evades the necessity of manual toil. The consequence is we have a surplus of idle loungers who are too proud and lazy to take in hand some honest labor by which they might earn a livelihood and fill a place of usefulness in the world. Pride of heart is one of the principal causes of this hatred to labor, and a desire to keep up an appearance and to take a high position in society under the promptings of ambition, forbids the humility necessary to the pursuit of honest toil. God's Word commands to labor, but the rebellious heart of man devises schemes to evade it, and poverty, suffering and crime is the consequence. If labor was honored as it ought to be there would be more of the youth engage in it, and early habits once formed to labor, the foundation is laid for a life of usefulness and prosperity. It is a sad mistake when farmers son's get tired of their honest call and give it up for an easy life in the city. Many a youth has left a quiet country home where he had all the comforts of life, with a healthy body and a sound mind to enjoy them, and took up a calling in the city where he got in return a feverish busy brain a sickly body and state of mind unfitted for any real enjoyment. Better stay on the farm boys and fill the sphere

of life which will give you peace of mind and a competency of comfort, than to run a risk in the uncertain fluctuations which attend city life. "Slow and steady gains give competence with tranquility of mind," and this is far better than to deprive labor of its true dignity by aspiring to a position which you are unfitted to fill.

CHRISTIAN CONFLICT.

"Put on the whole armour of God."

The place the Christian takes, upon the acceptance of Christ as his Saviour, as Lord and Head, implies conflict of a necessity. By taking sides with God, he necessarily declares himself against Satan, the world and the flesh, because these are respectfully opposed to Christ, to the Father, and to the Holy Ghost. Satan is opposed to Christ in everything, and the flesh is opposed to the Spirit. This is plainly shown in the scriptures, and every one who is willing to own the Lord Jesus as a Saviour and Lord, must expect warfare. He first finds it in himself with a depraved deceitful heart, desperately wicked, a heart capable of conceiving all sorts of evil, of indulging in all manner of excess and sin; and full of malice and hatred toward God. Then the new nature "formed within the hope of glory," finds a cunning deceitful devil to contend with, one who tries to thwart all efforts to serve Christ, and to attract the service to himself. Then there is the vain, delusive, flattering world, throwing out its power constantly to hinder and entrap the feet of the Christian. But who is sufficient for these things? Where is the power to come from to enable him to withstand the conflict and pressure of evil. Christ is sufficient if the Christian is simple and dependent upon Him. Then there is the craft of false theology, infidelity and witchcraft to withstand. God's Word can try the spirits whether they be of God,

and the weapons of the Christian warfare are not carnal, "but mighty in the Lord to the pulling down of strongholds." The clever advocates of Unitarianism, Universalism, Spiritualism, Mormonism, Annihilationism and infidelity in general, are all easily conquered by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. May we trust in God and not in ourselves in fighting the good fight of faith.

JOY IN TEMPTATION.

"My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."

All joy must I reckon it,
If beset with trials round?
My reasoning heart would ask again,
Where is the ground?

Ah hush thy reasoning, count on Him,
Who from the desert waste,
Can cause refreshing springs to flow.
Sweet to the taste.

All's in His hand, my woes and joys,
Nor would I change the way,
It seemeth best He'd lead me through
Life's little day.

Bow would I to the chastening rod;
His yoke of service wear;
Rejoicing that in Him I can
All burdens bear.

How light the heart and free,
That looks to Him for aid,
No terror here by man devised
Can make afraid.

Upward, to the goal I press,
With step unhindered here,
Rising o'er the mists that would cloud
My view up there.

Oh what to Faith's ecstatic gaze
Enables me to scan,
As fruit of knowing Him as Lord
Through life's short span.

My joy while there is often full,
 As His bright form I see,
 As in communion sweet with Him,
 He cheereth me.

Yes, rich is the repast by faith,
 Our trysting hours afford,
 As meditation lends its aid
 O'er the blessed Word.

My Lord may we continue thus
 To journey through the scene ;
 Till where Thou art thou'll call me soon
 From earth to screen.

ON THE EVILS ARISING FROM POPULAR PASTIMES.

Dear A——: As you seem to be exercised in soul about certain pastimes, which have been by some termed *innocent*, we will briefly consider the subject in a letter.

We ought to enquire, as a test before engaging in anything, whether we can do it to the honor and glory of God or not. This searching question will determine whether a practice is sinful or not if we allow the Holy Spirit to apply it to our understanding. If we grieve and hinder Him from teaching us God's thoughts about any practice, we are sure to be deceived, for our thoughts are not His thoughts, and Satan will be sure to tell us that the most wicked pastimes are harmless. He that relishes and engages in heartless pastimes, is not in a spirit of seriousness and sobriety. A reckless tone of soul is encouraged which hardens the heart against the offers of the Word, dissipates the calmness of mind which it bestows, and paves the way for Satanic influences. That person or that family circle, which delights in the soulless games of cards, checkers, backgammon and other kindred games, not only disobeys scripture in one point which says, "redeem the time for the days are evil," but is soon ready to overstep its guardian bounds at other points. We

are not to expect unconverted people will consider the deep responsibility resting upon them to obey God's Word, but believers, members of Christ's body, *are* responsible to deny themselves of heartless pastimes which the ungodly call *innocent*, that they may show themselves obedient servants of the God they profess to love. When we enter the houses of professed Christians, and see cards and dime novels lying about on the table and mantelpiece, and discover in conversation with their inmates a decided aversion to spiritual things, we conclude that they have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. When their time is taken up by attending dances and amusement parties, we look upon their attendance upon the gatherings of God's people, for the sake of appearance, as a mere exhibition of hypocrisy. My young reader, if you have taken a stand for Christ, maintain it consistently and you will find you have no time to spend in rounds of folly which some term innocent amusements. We are called to "glorify God in our bodies which are His." We should "work out (or show forth) our salvation with fear and trembling." Does God "work within us to will and do of His good pleasure" while we are engrossed in the excitement of any senseless pastime? Think over this a moment calmly and seriously. Does not Satan claim your service while thus engaged? Are not dancing, card-playing, theater-going, ball-rolling, billiards, &c., fine subtle inventions of the devil to lull you into carnal security and occupy your time to the exclusion of Christ, either in meditation or service? The more "respectably" he can employ you the better he is satisfied, because he can flatter you through the approval of the world's refinement, and thus puff you up with a fine idea of self, and gain a more complete victory over you. You must account to God for the way you spend your time here, and how can you, who desire to take your place as a Christian, waste it as well as your energies and health in keeping

time to a squeaking fiddle, or in the excitement created in gaming? If your neighbor should cast his money in handfulls in the street, you would call him mad, but he is not so much so as you when you spend your time and means in gaming or any soulless pastime. Theatre going leads to the gambling house, thence to the dance house and brothel, thus you have the paved way to hell, finely illuminated with glowing colors and dazzling array. A ruined character and the open door to crime, is often the result of a course of amusement, which when first entered upon, was thought to be harmless and necessary for the vigorous development of the physical faculties. If parents would put their children to exercise with the spade and hoe on a plot of ground, or with tools of some useful trade, and so cultivate a taste for some healthy employment instead of encouraging them to attend ball-alleys and billiard-rooms, they would not only see well developed bodies, but a symmetry of soul resulting from a consciousness of well spent time. Youthful reader, consider well before you allow yourself to engage in heartless amusements. Do not throw yourself into the tempter's power. Your usefulness as a Christian is at stake the moment you allow your mind to run upon anything of an amusing character. You are always safe while engaged in any sober-minded, useful employment. Your heart will be established in the truth by reading the Word of God, or good books, the products of serious minds. If you are truly a child of God, your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and if you go contrary to God's Word you will be reproved by the blessed Spirit within you. If you are not converted you may accept Christ at once and have the Holy Ghost to guide and direct you by applying the word of God with power to your heart. Amen.

EARTHLY LORE AND SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT.

There is such a difference between the effects of earthly knowledge upon one's spirit, and those produced by attainment in the things of God, that it is well to note the contrast. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity (or love) edifieth," and this edification comes through humility or willingness to be instructed in godly knowledge. Earthly lore creates pedantry and man elevation which is abominable in God's sight. It often raises the natural man into a fancied position of superiority, begets spiritual idolatry and stands as a barrier to the acceptance of a needed and crucified Redeemer. It esteems the preaching of the Cross as foolishness, and tries to supplant it by ambitious assumptions of man's power to progress in his own strength, to a high degree of perfection in opposition to God's estimate of man as containing by nature no good thing. When God speaks, it is Divine authority upon which we can rely, and how His estimate of man does wither up into nothing all the presumptuous pretensions to perfection in the natural man. But when the convicted soul feels his need of a Saviour by accepting God's thoughts of his own nothingness, and finds his need met in the person of a crucified Christ, quite a different estimate is made by him of what he is before God.

When man's wisdom becomes the ground and means of elevation, "the wisdom which is from above" will be poorly estimated. It is well for us if we can take God's side of everything, and when this is done we will value all things rightly and not be deceived by false pretences and appearances. The boldest and most artful opposers of God's Word are those who possess the greatest amount of human wisdom manifested by means of earthly knowledge.

YOKES OF BONDAGE.

“Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage,” Gal. 5, 1. As the service of Satan is truly bondage, so that of Christ is perfect liberty. The Christian is one set free to serve in liberty as a bright contrast to the bondage he was under as a child of Adam. The yoke of bondage which Paul by the Spirit was warning the Galatians against was legality, which Judaizing teachers were endeavoring to propagate among them. So hateful was this legal bondage that the apostle has to say, “O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you,—received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?” chap. 3, 1-2. And as to their time service, “Ye observe days and months and times and years, I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.” He even had to “travail in birth again until Christ be formed in them—and to change his voice for he stood in doubt of them,” chap. iv, vs. 19, 20. This all because they were falling back into the bondage from which they had been delivered. A solemn lesson for these last days! Every turn the Christian takes now, a yoke of bondage in some form temptingly courts his neck. The world with its flattering offers, the flesh with its cunning deceptions, and Satan with his wiles, are constantly at work, against which he can only hope to stand by constant watchfulness and prayer. Even the necessary things for our daily physical comfort, are woven into a net work of intricacies to entrap our feet and burden our spirits, unless kept rigidly in their place and our thoughts upon Christ. How stern and tyrannical the world becomes when it once gets a hold upon us, and none but Christ can deliver us by casting our burden upon Him. The liberty in which the Christian is called to stand, is that of being led by the eye of God, and not held in as the horse or the mule, by bit and bridle. This is a strong contrast to the liberty

of man who seeks to have his own way, to follow his own free will, which is always sure to plunge him into trouble and difficulties. Men talk loudly and struggle hard for freedom and liberty, to have scope for their own wills to work in, but the Lord says to such "come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of *me* for my yoke is easy and my burden is light," Mat. xi, 29, 30. Christ's yoke is easy as it delivers us from the yokes of Satan and keeps us delivered if we wear it faithfully. He is not only a Saviour to free us from judgment and its penalties, but saves us from the galling slavery of sin and its baneful consequences daily. May we not forget this as it is important that a welling forth of thanksgiving go up from our hearts daily for His never ceasing office work in the presence of God for us. It is forgetting Him and what He can daily do for us, that allows the bondage of circumstances to weigh us down. This may seem extravagant to the carnal minded, but to the spiritually minded Christian, it is practical and comforting and needful too for his growth in grace and the things of God.

Ottawa, Sept. 18th, 1879.

TRUTH.

There is always safety in taking sides with truth. Although the way be rough, and the enemies we have to contend with are crafty, and merciless, yet in the end we are sure to conquer, if faithful in the contest. We need to count the cost before setting out in company with Truth and her followers. The more faithful we are in the path, the more sure we are to meet opposition and persecution. Clouds may lower over our heads, the tempest may rage fiercely around us, and the darkness be so great that we may not be able to see where we are to take the next step, but if we press forward, trusting in Him who came into the world as the embodiment of Grace and Truth, and with His

word as the "lamp to our feet and a light to our path," we are sure to come out of the struggle victorious. If we are on the side of Truth there will be a certain sound in our speech and actions that will commend itself to those who are able to commend us to the Lord who is the source of all power and true favor. Worldlings and hirelings, who are bought and sold by filthy lucre and worldly favor, will not continue in the way with truth, though happily they may fall into it for the purpose of serving their own ends and enhancing the value of what they possess. But true heartedness in the path with Truth, looks only above for encouragement and reward, and will not allow temporal considerations to sway in the way, but steadiness of purpose and unflinching perseverance will show all enemies that there can be no denial to what is right, and no compromise with evil. Let us "stand in the evil day and having done all to stand," amid the shifting corruptions of worldly policy, assured that though we may contend against odds, in the end we will gain the victory, and the greater the opposition the more glorious the victory.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers ;
But error falling writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers."

MY HOME UP THERE.

Why should I be clinging to what is down here ?
My home is in *heaven*—my High Priest is *there* ;
He has gone up before me, a place to prepare ;
That, when He comes for me, His throne I may share.

This world is a wilderness—its *best offers* are
But dross, when compared with the poorest up there ;
My poor heart is weary of all that I see ;
I long in the presence of Jesus to be.

I know He will *soon* come ; the time hastens on,
When weary ones, now hear, with Him will be gone ;
The shout they'll *soon* here, the trump will soon sound,
The faithful on earth will no more be found.

TO FAITH.

Bright blessed Faith, through thee we view
 The prize our souls so much desire ;
 Thy buoyant wing bears us to Him
 Who fills our hearts with holy fire ;
 And calls us forth, in prayer and praise,
 The songs of triumph here to raise.

Through thee the mighty plans of God
 Before our wondering eyes are seen
 In bright review, to cheer our hearts,
 To fill the interval between
 His going up and coming down,
 To take His Bride to wear her crown.

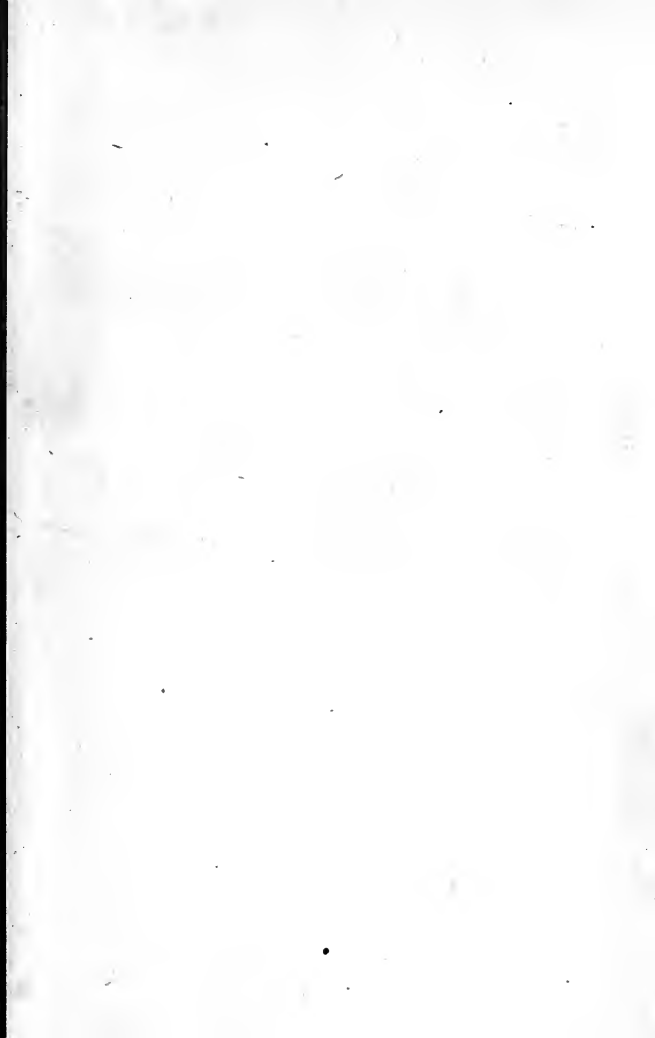
The rapturous songs by thee are heard,
 As soaring on high her Lord to meet,
 And as she toils on earth below,
 With throbbing heart and hastening feet,
 To thee she owes those glances bright
 Of Him in whom she doth delight.

TRUST IN CHRIST.

We trust in Christ our Risen Head,
 In Him who on the Cross has bled
 Our ransom to secure ;
 Within the veil, by faith, we dwell,
 And know " 'tis with believers well,"
 That our salvation 's sure

As pilgrims and as strangers here,
 As members of Himself, so dear,
 He nourishes with care ;
 His life sustains each member now,
 Our power to walk from him doth flow,
 He doth our trials share.

If persecuted for His sake,
 He soon our cause doth undertake,
 " 'Tis I who suffers thus ;"
 Our burden falls, our hearts arise,
 On faith's light wing we reach the skies ;
 From ill He rescues us.





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